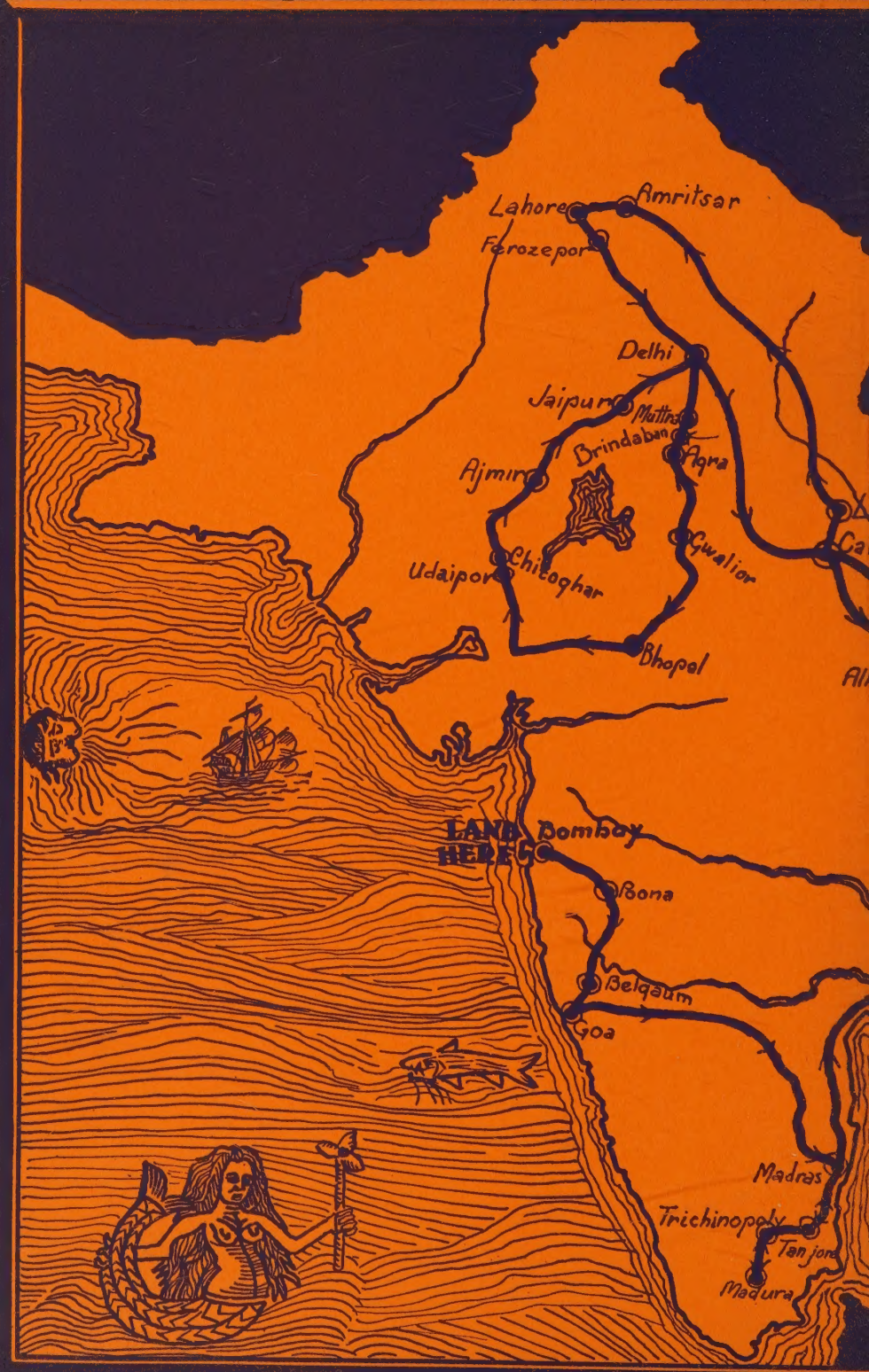
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Understanding India

PILGRIMS AT THE JUNCTION OF MOGHAL SARAI WAITING FOR THE TRAIN TO BENARES

UNDERSTANDING INDIA

by

GERTRUDE MARVIN WILLIAMS

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To J. H. W.

A glossary beginning on page 325 defines all Indian words used.

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Why I Wrote This Book

As a child, I was always traveling. My father was in the United States Army, and we crossed the continent eleven times before I was eighteen. College, five vivid years of newspaper work, and then I settled down to the domesticity of married life. But I was haunted by far horizons and the names of strange and distant places.

A few years ago, I collaborated with Bishop Frederick B. Fisher, a devoted friend of India, in writing *India's Silent Revolution.* Several months' research work in the Congressional Library gave me new impetus to see the other side of the world. I realized that I might wait until I was an old lady before my husband could accompany me and so, one day, I decided to go alone.

My five months in India carried me back to the absorbing enthusiasms of youth. I felt that I had been waiting all my life to see the Orient. I found color and sunshine. I found dirt, disease and poverty. But there was fascination in supplementing the bare-bones framework of dusty *District Gazetteers* and *Inquiries* with the sunshine and shadow of the real India.

While I was turning my notes on India into a book, *Mother India* appeared. Miss Mayo and I were in India during successive winters. I was interested and

surprised that another American woman, "unsubsidized, uncommitted and unattached" as she describes herself, should bring away such different impressions of the same country. I think that the difference in what Miss Mayo and I saw was due in part to the way we saw it.

I traveled more than 6,000 miles in India, and I traveled alone. I ignored the British convention which forbids a white woman, unless accompanied by a white man, to enter the close-built poorer quarters of Indian cities, even in broad daylight. I had no itinerary, but decided where to go next as I went along. I visited Indian homes. I poked around in remote villages of aborigines. I traveled first, second, and third-class. Much of the time I traveled without a bearer or servant, an almost obligatory accessory for the foreigner in India. I wanted to buy my tickets and make the other petty contacts which a servant would have saved me.

As I was entertained by Indians in their homes, I lost the sense of watching a spectacle. Instead of a panorama, moving in two directions, the Indian scene took on a third dimension. Without being sentimental or blind to India's failures, it is only just to remember that many of the customs for which she is most severely condemned prevailed throughout the world until the last few centuries, and still exist in our own backward communities.

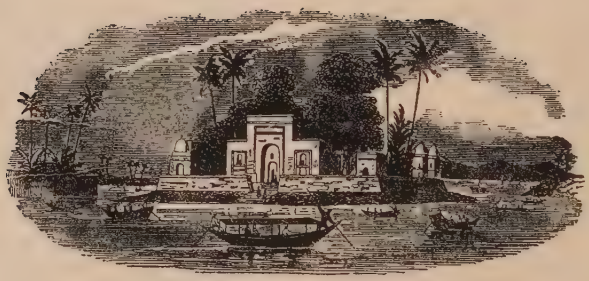
Science has snapped many of the chains of medieval superstition, filth and illiteracy for the Western world. India, peculiarly isolated both by culture and position,

has never broken the chains that bind her to the Middle Ages. It was this sense of an India slowed up by climate, by the inertia of age, by isolation but, underneath, of the same essential human stuff as ourselves that impelled me, while I was still in India, to begin this book. My hope was that it would help in understanding India. Such a vast and diverse country as India offers numerous exceptions to every generalization. I have set down here my impressions. More intimate knowledge might lead me to reject some of them, and might confirm others.

If we wish to see the lives of our ancestors of a few generations ago, we have only to visit India with its primitive village life and lumbering wooden-wheeled bullock carts, its one-roomed huts, its dirt and flies and smells, and its precious sense of leisure to sit in the sun.

G. M. W.

THRESHOLD



Bombay—Wanted on Voyage

India Office, Whitehall, London,—magical words, teeming with power and politics and romance. The building is a forbidding pile of brownstone between the Horse Guards Parade and the Cenotaph to the Unknown Soldier. I seemed to see through the windows rows of clerks on high stools bending over old-fashioned slant-topped desks, middle-aged men in black and gray alpaca coats. No clatter of typewriters broke the stillness. Over all brooded an air of leisure and deliberation.

The long windows gave me a tantalizing sense of musty sheepskin ledgers and files of amazing information about everybody and everything in India for the last two centuries. I thought of the long procession of men, charming, crafty, scheming, brilliant, who had crossed this threshold, vibrant with all the motives in the human gamut, from dreams of reform to schemes for snatching millions. The grim brown walls towered above me as inscrutable as the statue of Clive at the end of the street.

I turned back to my hotel, a shabby, Dickensy place on Jermyn Street, patronized by simple people from Shropshire and Warwick and Devon. The passage leading to my room was choked with some one's luggage, the stout, serviceable pigskin and canvas of the

seasoned traveler, spotted with bright new labels, 'BOMBAY—WANTED ON VOYAGE.'

It was the sailing day of the P. & O. boat. This day week I, too, should be on my way. The next room to mine in this stuffy little hotel sheltered some one else bound for the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean. I gloated over the bright red letters: Bombay—Bombay. They brought the Orient nearer and made it seem more real than years of studying maps and memoirs.

Shivering in the half-lighted passage I had a vivid sense of The Empire. Under the sputtering gas light the Bombay labels radiated the warmth and brilliance and perfume of the East. I understood what it means to quiet, home-loving folk from Shropshire and Devon to stumble over luggage bound for Bombay, Singapore, Hong Kong, and all the seven seas and wide horizons of the British Empire.

The Passage to India

EVERY winter the outgoing P. & O. boats are crowded with British officials returning to India, and young subalterns going out for the first time. I boarded the S. S. *Caledonia* in the clammy chill of late autumn. The Laskar crew were thin, shivering little brown men with no hips, barefooted, in blue denim smocks and white drawers reaching to their ankles. They had mournful faces, and wore incongruously gay monkey caps—a circle of parchment like a tambourine, bound to their heads at a jaunty tilt with a scarlet *pugree*.

The first morning out, as I took my place at table, I said Good-morning to my English neighbors. The men looked embarrassed and the women looked blank. No one replied. It is a three weeks' trip from London to Bombay. We had our permanent places at table. I never spoke to any of them again, and they never spoke to me. Nor did they usually speak to each other unless they had been introduced before sailing.

Three New England sisters, who knew their Europe well, were making a first trip to the Orient. Two of them were white-haired. They were women of culture and dignity. English reserve did not freeze them up as it did me, but only amused them. They said that they got on famously with the men, but that none of the women would say a word.

The P. & O. decks serve as an excellent laboratory for observation of the English colonial. John Bull maintains the same rigid standards of traditional usage on shipboard as in London, in Indian cantonments, in isolated jungle stations. The men all wore flannel blazers with smooth brass buttons and an elaborate school crest worked in white on the upper left pocket, the collar turned up as though it were raining; and a battered old felt hat with the brim turned down all round.

They have their little formulæ for even such trivial matters as walking the deck. With one hand gripped in the trouser pocket, usually the left, they swing by, walking well forward on their toes at a rapid, rhythmic pace, their lips puckered round a pipe, their eyes rather vacant, their right arms swinging in unison with the regularity of piston rods. You may be sure that there is something the matter with any man who deviates in the smallest particular. The absence of a crest, for instance, worked on his blazer pocket, shows that a man did not go to the right sort of school.

As soon as we were fairly at sea, the English passengers organized their sports in a serious way. The men appeared in shorts—a khaki trouser, cut like B. V. D.'s, which leaves the knees bare, and is universal in the tropics except on formal occasions. The *Caledonia* was an old boat and was retired from service later that same winter. She had the same old-fashioned accommodations that I remember on our American troopships when, as a girl, I traveled to and from Hon-

olulu. The *Caledonia* had only one first-class deck. An entire side was roped off for games. Promenaders were relegated to the other side, where we milled about among perambulators, velocipedes, children's playing-blocks, and all the impedimenta of 400 first-class passengers. After five o'clock tea, the decks thinned out as passengers went below to nap and bathe and dress for dinner.

On a secluded end of the deck one evening, I was alone with the miracle of twilight at sea—the feathery mist that sifts down over sapphire blue waters until sea and sky blend into an enveloping haze. Gradually, I became aware of a soft, regular patter. I turned and discovered a handsome British officer jumping rope. He wore khaki shorts, a thin shirt open at the neck, and soft rubber shoes. With the precision of a machine, the arc of rope swung over his head, followed by the muffled thud of his feet on the deck. After watching him for some time, I began to count, and counted 700. When he stopped, a quiet circle of promenaders had gathered to watch him. I heard some one say that he had jumped 1,000 times. There was a gentle buzz of hand-clapping. I realized that this was, to the bystanders, a tremendously complex occasion—a conflict between their standards of reserve and decorum and their passionate admiration for a sportsman. I was glad that for once they had let the more positive emotion run away with them. Every night the handsome officer jumped rope 1,000 times, but never again did they pay any attention to him.

It is a strange thing to live with a small group of approximately one's own class week after week and never speak to any of them. There were long days of silence, at table, on deck, in the saloon sipping coffee after dinner. The English do their best to keep the world at arm's length, and yet one does observe quaintly intimate details.

The *Caledonia*, being an old boat, there were no showers and only five tubs for all the first-class women passengers. It was not customary to reserve a certain period as one's own bath hour. When I heard the rising bell, or as soon thereafter as my courage permitted, I used to roll out of bed, slip into dressing-gown and slippers, give my hair a pat, and slide down the passage to a bath, patiently to await my turn. There were always five to ten Englishwomen ahead of me; and in those long, silent watches, I could but observe them. They wore the most ravishing negligees, passionate pinks and languorous lavenders; the homeliest old dowagers were rather the most fastidious. All wore boudoir caps, fantastic contraptions of ribbon and lace and coquettishly nestling rosebuds. The caps were purely decorative for, under the flutings and fringes, I could see that their heads were coifed, their faces made up, and even their earrings in place. All carried sponges, and my clean white washcloth was as conspicuous as a flag of truce. I thought sometimes that they rather glared at it. But I prefer washcloths.

I was impressed by the delightful manners of the men. I had heard so much, as I traveled around the

world, about the complete subjugation of the American male beneath the domestic yoke, that it had become rather tiresome. Englishmen, to live up to the way they talk about American men, should greet their wives with kicks and oaths. On the contrary, I thought the Englishmen waited on their wives and showed them more polite little attentions than American men would ever think of.

As a group, these English colonials maintained a high human average. There was not a fat man on board, only a few over-plump women, and none of those frizzy-haired, Victorian frumps always to be seen on Cunarders crossing the Atlantic. Men and women, both looked fit. The women wore their clothes well, not only the evening clothes, for which they are famous, but also their sport clothes. Their low-pitched voices filled me with admiration. The saloon where we gathered after dinner was particularly low-ceiled and crowded. Yet there was never more than the quietest buzz of conversation, as the stewards poured coffee and asked, "Will you have it black or white?"

It is part of the British technique of colonization to maintain a high standard of white prestige in the Orient. There is only one Englishman to every 3,000 Indians. They have imitated Indian royalty in surrounding themselves with servants. An Englishman of any pretensions does not carry so much as a book. A servant follows him bearing it. In the house, the master leans back in his chair when he wants something and calls, 'Boy!'

In adapting himself to this exalted position, the Englishman has adopted the famous Hindu custom of caste. English colonial society is organized into compartments almost as water-tight as the Hindu's. The P. & O. boats afford an excellent demonstration. They are a microcosm of life in India.

Exalted and alone on the promenade deck sat an English Prince and Princess in special green wicker deck chairs, with a discreet space on either side. Although there is no casual conversation with strangers on P. & O. boats, the first morning out, somehow, every one was notified that nobody speaks to a Prince and Princess unless first spoken to. For most of the voyage, the Prince sat and smoked and looked sad and bored; and the Princess sat and looked like a pretty pink and white china doll. She did not read, she did not sew, nor play cards, nor talk. She just looked out across the water.

In the aura of royalty, clustered the aristocracy: some titled M. P.s, a French Countess, a Lord High Admiral, traveling with pretty Lady Somebody, a niece or a cousin whom he was chaperoning to India for the winter. I happened to meet them a year later crossing the Pacific. Evidently, he was still chaperoning her.

Somewhere below the Lords and Sirs, come the magic initials I. C. S. A man has them engraved after his name on calling cards and letter heads. They mean Indian Civil Service, and while they may not carry such weight in England, they mean everything in

India. These men administer the *raj* (British Government). Their salaries are the highest in the world for similar work. In India, their prestige is enormous.

Considerably below the I. C. S., but still able to think very well of themselves, comes the British Army in India. They are stationed in cantonments, and have their own social life.

Far below the army comes the Englishman in trade, the *boxwallah* as he is scornfully known. The stigma which, until recently, attached to trade in England still persists in India. At the bottom stand the servant class, nurses, mechanics, laboring men—not many of these, as it is cheaper to use Indians.

It is amusing that the four grades of British society in India should correspond to the four main caste divisions of the Hindu. The I. C. S. is, of course, the *Brahman* who has the ear of the gods. The British army are the *Kshatriyas* or warrior caste; the business men are the *Vaisyas* or tradesmen; the servants are the *Sudra* or servant caste. Each class corresponds in precedence and function except that the I. C. S. do not, I presume, include the priestly function of the *Brahman* among their activities.

Suddenly we were in the tropics. The change happened overnight. In the morning, crew and stewards were wearing white. The dining-saloon was swathed in white covers. Electric fans buzzed. Women appeared in midsummer dresses. The English thawed a bit. They smiled more easily. Crossing the Red Sea, four women spoke to me. I took the trouble to

inquire where they came from. They were Scotch or Irish women who had married into the Indian services, with one exception—a tall and handsome woman with an imposing bearing and a twinkling sense of humor. She was a Londoner.

A Canadian engineer introduced a British army Captain now in the Iraq Civil Service. The Captain told entertaining stories of the Garden of Eden of which he had charge. The Canadian and I teased him about British reserve as illustrated on board the ship. The Captain looked surprised.

"You don't call this crowd reserved, do you?" he asked. "I should call them extraordinarily informal. There are very few I. C. S. on board. This is a rummy crowd of nobodies. That is what makes them so sociable."

Beginnings

BLAZING light and color, slim brown legs and naked bodies under a sapphire sky—that's Bombay.

A dilapidated victoria, the driver in fluttering red and white rags, took me past the portals of the mysterious East. After dropping my luggage in the hotel, I could not wait for breakfast, but slipped out through the broad conventional streets of the Apollo Bunder to the nearest bazaar.

Merchants unhooked shutters from hole-in-the-wall shops, no larger than a small show-window. Squatting on a cushion, they smoked their *hookahs*. Coolies, with bodies of mahogany and bronze, wore loin cloths and turbans of rust-red and dust-color. Coolie women's brass anklets clicked a castanet accompaniment. Like the *houris* in our Follies' shows, they wore a short red scarf about the hips, the ends crossed over the breasts. There was no coquetry about them. They swept past half-naked, unconscious as children, with the beautiful carriage of women who carry burdens on their heads.

Touring Europe to-day, the *nouveau riche* travels in state from one capital city to another, staying always at the best hotels. The more discriminating traveler seeks undiscovered country where he may escape tourists and live among peasants and villagers—Breton, Basque or Piedmontese. In Europe, this has become

quite the smart thing to do. The moment the traveler crosses into Asia, however, a subtle Nordic self-consciousness interposes itself between him and the life of the people.

The newcomer has much to learn in India, so much that there is a special word for him: he is a *griffin*. Tourists usually take their cue from the English, surround themselves with bearers (personal servants), and travel in a weak imitation of the glorious days of the Nabobs.

I determined to 'get off the beaten track.' I had letters to English people in the various services but, on my second day in Bombay, I decided not to present them. The one Britishwoman who had spoken to me on shipboard had proved very friendly. Her husband was a high official in the I. C. S. They had lived in India for over twenty-five years, and he had been Resident of one of the most important Indian states.

Though she had all the earmarks of her class, Mrs. P. was an individual. I came to know her well enough to ask how her friends liked her independence. She laughed and said that she was always getting into hot water for her unconventionality. Perhaps the most conventional thing about her was her attitude toward Indians. She did not believe they were capable of disinterested friendship, but that they were all self-seeking and deceitful.

The day after we landed, she and I motored over to Malabar Hill, the smart residential section of Bombay. Coming back, we had to drive through the

The King's Library

crowded bazaars, and the chauffeur persisted in driving so fast that I could see nothing. It was too tantalizing. As it was still early, perhaps five o'clock, and broad daylight, I suggested that we dismiss the motor and walk back to the hotel. Mrs. P. said that Englishwomen never walked in what she called the native city unless accompanied by one of their own men. I showed surprise and Mrs. P. insisted that it would be dangerous, as the people were sullen and tricky. She told with great emphasis of the boycott and rioting when the Prince of Wales had visited Bombay several years earlier. There had been no recent riots, no particular restlessness; but her distrust was as keen as ever.

We passed empty victorias jogging along. I suggested that we change into one, so that, driving slowly, we could see something of the color and life of the bazaar. Mrs. P. hesitated. She was sorry, but it would be extremely indiscreet to set foot anywhere in this section of the city. When we were safely back in the select neighborhood of our hotel, she dismissed the car, and we walked through the park bordering the harbor. Several hundred men and women promenaded to the strains of a band concert. They were chiefly Parsi women who do not observe *purdah*—that is, do not veil their faces and remain in seclusion. Twilight was falling by this time, and we were alone among the Indians. But this was different. This was the British section of Bombay. It was only to cross the line into the Indian city that was tabu.

The next day, quite alone, I walked from end to end of the bazaars. From then on, I poked about in Indian cities, large and small, at all hours of day and evening, often alone. I never experienced the slightest embarrassment. I met only courtesy.

My experience with Mrs. P. deeply impressed me. I am sure that she was sincere. She prided herself on being free and unconventional. In a way, she was. Some of the other women I talked to were stupid and hysterical. Mrs. P. was an exceptional person, intelligent and liberal. After a quarter-century in high official position in India, she considered it unsafe to set foot in broad daylight outside the English residential and business districts of any city. Under such conditions, it is obvious that no woman who respects English traditions can know much about India. My plans for seeing India were so completely at variance with English standards that I feared I might be a source of embarrassment to the friends who had vouched for me, and so decided not to present further letters.

The first Indian I went to see in Bombay was Mr. K. Natarajan. My only introduction was to tell him that I had been a reader of his admirable weekly paper, *The Indian Social Reformer,* for some years. He received me as hospitably as though I had presented the most august letters, and introduced me to other prominent Indians, as well as to his daughters and a group of delightful Indian ladies.

Until it was time to go to Belgaum, for the annual meeting of the Indian National Congress, with Gandhi

presiding, I took short trips around Bombay. I visited the great cotton-spinning and weaving factories employing 150,000 workers, and the incredible *chawls* (one-room huts) in which the workers live. I visited the Elephanta Caves, temples hewn into the virgin rock, their gigantic columns and walls covered with bas-reliefs of gods and animals in endless procession.

An English acquaintance took me to the famous Bombay Yacht Club whose threshold, in the past, no Indian, however distinguished, might cross. We sat on the gravel terrace, drinking tea, while the band played. Shadows blotted out the city; we watched the twinkling lights of ships from all the seven seas, riding at anchor in one of the most beautiful harbors in the world.

There are many pitfalls for the traveler in India, such as listening to advice to buy a *topee* instantly or risk dropping dead of sunstroke. Some tourists get so excited that they buy *topees* in Port Said and hang them in their cabins as a talisman until they reach Bombay. A *topee* is a ventilated cork helmet. It is cool and comfortable for men, but it is the most uncouth thing a woman ever attempted to wear. It would make a French mannequin look meek and dowdy.

It is worse than unbecoming, however. It marks the woman tourist a mile off, because, as I ultimately realized, resident Englishwomen rarely wear them. They stay in the house during the heat of the day and emerge later with charming hats and parasols. When wearing a *topee*, I was instantly set upon by all the

horde who specialize in tourists—vendors of everything from unset jewels to Kashmir furniture—guides, snake charmers, magicians, fortune tellers, beggars. They line the hotel verandas. The veranda concession of even a second-rank Delhi hotel, so I was told, is worth $3,000 a year.

The colonials who advised me on the steamer were unanimous on several points: Be sure that every drop of water you drink has been boiled; always wear a *topee* from sunrise to sunset; wear a flannel band around your stomach as long as you are in the tropics. Most emphatic of all, you must have a personal servant, a 'bearer.' They take it for granted that you will engage one immediately on landing in Bombay. When I delayed, they pursued me with warnings. Indians are so dishonest, they said, that the bearer has to watch one's things in hotel rooms and on trains while one goes to meals, or they will be stolen. They added that the smaller hotels do not provide adequate service, a serious matter in a land of no plumbing. I never discovered how, if Indians are such thieves, they dare trust the bearer himself.

In the meantime, some of the Indians I met suggested that I might find it an interesting experience to do without a bearer for part of my trip and that, when I visited the National Congress, it might put me on a friendlier footing to be unattended, instead of appearing like the usual tourist.

Staying at the comfortable Taj Mahal Hotel in Bombay, surrounded by Europeans (the term for all

whites, including the English and Americans) was simple enough. It was with a renewed spirit of adventure that I shopped for my traveling equipment, and prepared to fare forth into the Unknown.

Travelers always provide their own bedding in India, not only on trains, but in hotels and *dak bungalows* (rest houses provided for travelers in the interior, off the railroads). The bedding-roll is a brown canvas cover holding sheets and steamer rug made up like a berth, with pillow at the head. It rolls up and fastens with straps. At night it is only necessary to unroll it; in the morning to roll it up. This necessity to roll and unroll one's bedding in the absence of any one corresponding to a sleeping-car porter is one of the reasons why it is absolutely impossible to travel without a bearer in India. That an Indian should catch a glimpse of a *sahib* or *memsahib* engaged in this menial occupation does not accord with the exigencies of white prestige.

I traveled both with and without a servant. The expense of a bearer is negligible. I paid mine $12 a month. He fed himself and slept on the floor outside my door. A competent and honest bearer is a great comfort. But he is not easy to find. Most bearers are outcastes, Muslims or Christians. Their religion prevents many caste Hindus from taking such work. The tourist must have a man who speaks English, and his only means of obtaining one is through the tourist agencies. The agencies have had so much difficulty in this connection that they refuse to assume responsi-

bility, and take the attitude that to supply a bearer is to do you a great favor. The supply is limited to a small group, many of whom specialize in fleecing tourists. The tourists are often to blame. Many of them have not had their money long. Having acquired wealth by inheritance, by profiteering, or by a shift in the market, they set off round the world. They like to be conspicuous as easy spenders. To a people as poor as the Indians, their example is demoralizing.

A bearer is essential only when traveling cross-country and stopping at *dak bungalows*. I vastly prefer doing without to putting up with an unsatisfactory or dishonest boy. I have stayed at the smallest Indian hotels and always found plenty of servants, willing and courteous, and usually able to speak English. I was so much impressed by my English friends that, for the first few days, I put away and locked up my things every time I left my room. I soon decided that I had not come to India to putter with cakes of soap. I was careful of my money, wearing it in a belt. My other things I left about my room, much as I should at home, and in all sorts of places—cities, villages, *dak bungalows*. I never missed the smallest article while in India.

When the trains were crowded and I traveled first-class, I met only the English and tourists. As the English never spoke, and the tourists talked too much, it was, for my purposes, time wasted. In the second-class, I met Indian women of the upper middle-class who sometimes spoke English. Most of the second-

class were Eurasians, the mixed bloods, Indian and white, ostracized by both groups—one of the most pitiful and puzzling of Indian problems.

I had just come from England where, I was told, only American millionaires and rich Jews travel first-class. In India, all Europeans who can afford to do so travel first. This is part of the British policy to maintain white prestige.

An Indian railway station platform is an amazing sight. Indians do not bother about time-tables. When they get ready to travel, they set off for the station. If the train has gone, they wait for the next one, whether it be two hours or twenty-three. They stretch themselves out and sleep anywhere. They do not bother to find a corner, or lie against the wall. They sleep all over the place; both night and day, one steps around and over prostrate figures. At night a station platform looks like a futurist study in black and white, long still figures wrapped in white scarves, set at curious angles in a sea of black shadows.

The stations are always crowded. In the larger cities they offer a marvelous cross section of India: peasant women in dull red and blue *saris*, with babies and bundles; piratical looking Kabuli money lenders, in baggy white trousers tied at the ankles, a *lathi* (long staff) and a gay turban; *purdah* ladies carried to the door of their compartment in a curtained *palanquin;* a jovial wedding party taking a strutting small boy to his bride's home; and always yellow-robed priests bound on mysterious pilgrimages.

Scurvy dogs slink about the trains looking for scraps. Children and beggars run up and down the platform, beside the first-class carriages, pleading for *baksheesh* (gifts of copper coins, *pice* worth a fraction of a cent). The children have a pitiful trick of slapping their stomachs, abnormally distended from malnutrition, and whining, "Me no father, me no mother, me very hungry, *baksheesh.*" They use this formula all over India. At first it was most upsetting, but I finally grew accustomed to it.

When traveling, Hindus carry *lotas*—brass jugs of drinking water. They cannot drink from a tank since it might have been filled by a member of a lower caste, and is used by the general public. In the morning, they squat beside the track with their brass *lotas*, and bits of twig which they split and use as tooth brushes. They gurgle and hawk and spit with a thoroughness that is fantastic. No Hindu will break his fast until he has performed his ablutions.

Important Indians travel in state, with a retinue of servants lined up to *salaam* them and to wait on them during the journey. When the Viceroy, high army or Civil Service officials, or visiting royalty travel, there is spectacular magnificence. Crimson velvet carpets are stretched across vast corridors. *Chuprassis* and bearers are everywhere, barefooted, in long white linen coats, crimson turbans and sashes. The carriages are painted in glistening white enamel.

For the rest, railway travel in India is a grand scramble. As the train draws in, the vendors begin to

chant their wares, a singsong with a wistful minor ending; *pan*, tobacco, fruit, soda water, *chapatis*. A haunting memory is the singsong of the vendors' chant through a haze of sleep as we pulled into stations late at night.

Crowds

Railroad trains, sewing machines and moving pictures have already become a part of Eastern life. The supply of railroad carriages never catches up with the demand, and the crowding and scrambling at railroad stations make a chaotic picture. At times of conventions and *melas* (religious festivals), the confusion is beyond belief.

Going down to Belgaum for the National Congress, I had my first experience of Indian crowds. I reached Poona in the evening, and had an hour to change trains. The station roof was high-arched, and gaunt iron stairs bridged the tracks. The platforms were a vortex of pushing, struggling shapes. Overhead lights made shining patches on the stairs through which there flowed a hurrying mass of white draperies, bare brown legs, bulging bundles, gorgeous turbans. It was like a cinema of a panic-stricken crowd evacuating a city.

A tall porter in a loin cloth piled my luggage in a pyramid on his head, bedding-roll, suitcase, typewriter. Dodging through the crowd, he followed me up and down beside the train. Solemn Indian servants on the steps of the first-class carriages insisted that every berth was reserved. The second-class needed no servants on the steps, for the cars were so full that no one

could lie down for the all-night trip. The third-class carriages were filled beyond belief. Not only were the lengthwise seats jammed, but so were every inch of floor space, the long shelves that serve as upper berths, the windows sills. And still people struggled to get in, pushing through windows, shoving at doors with cries and shouts until the mêlée looked and sounded like a rioting mob. From the chinks, like an excelsior packing, bulged tin boxes and bundles, *lathis*, *hookahs*, and brass *lotas*.

I appealed to the station master. How was I to get to Belgaum? He proved to be a friendly little cockney Englishman. Together we inspected the train. There was not a chink for a sardine.

"Honest, they sit on each other's shoulders, and 'ang from the ceiling, and the ones w'at's in 'avent got no more sense than to let the others in as long as they can push in." He was a kind and friendly person, but patronizing toward all Indians. He had married a girl from the Methodist mission, "and she knows an amazing lot about these 'ere Hindians. You'd oughter 'ear the Missus talk Marathi." He was making up a Congress Special to start an hour later, and would reserve a first-class compartment for me.

He led me across the bridges, away from the spluttering, pushing crowd, and had a coolie bring a steamer chair to a far platform where I could watch the mêlée. Presently he returned, "I've been eating my supper, and the Missus put in some proper plum pudding, w'at she made 'erself. I thought, being Christmas Eve,

it might cheer you a bit to have some, being so far away from 'ome an' all." By the light of a flickering lantern, we shared his plum pudding, while before us, like a scene on some vast operatic stage, thousands of Indians wove a picture of shifting lights and colors, with splashes of white, and long streaks of red and orange and green.

We were due in Belgaum at ten the next morning. I knew I should have brought a *tiffin* (luncheon) basket, but, as I wanted to travel light, I decided to sleep late and chance it. To be safe I bought in the Poona station two bottles of soda water and three oranges. The train, being a Congress Special, was filled with Indians. I think I was the only foreigner on board. Most of the Indians carried their own food and water, and we made no stops at the regular station restaurants. We were sidetracked by all the regular traffic, and were six hours late, reaching Belgaum at four o'clock of a blistering Christmas afternoon.

It was a very long train and my carriage was at the front end. When we stopped at smaller stations to water the engine, I could see, far back on the station platform, Indian vendors squatting over kettles of boiling *cha* (tea) and, across the burning desert, there came to me the cries of boys with trays of rice and curry. There were no train attendants within call. None of the Indians in the next cars knew any more than I did how long we were going to stop. I dared not run the long way back. Suppose the train started: I could not attempt to get into one of the crowded third-class

carriages, and there are no corridors in Indian trains.

I had used a bottle of soda for brushing my teeth and eaten one orange the night before. Two oranges and a bottle of warm soda were all I had until after five in the afternoon. A competent bearer would not have let me leave Poona without a *tiffin* basket. But looking back, the trip is a much more entertaining memory than if I had made it in perfect ease.

When I reached Belgaum at the end of that hot and dusty Christmas day, I found a sleepy village, quite swamped by the arrival overnight of 15,000 delegates to the annual National Congress, and as many more of their families and friends. There was no European hotel but, after persistent inquiry at the station, I heard of a restaurant which might have a room to let. It was run by an Eurasian woman and catered to the soldiers in the neighboring British cantonment. The village's half dozen *tongas* were all reserved for the famous Indians arriving by every train. The drivers shook their heads at me.

With a coolie who turned out to be deaf and dumb —though it did not matter in the least—I set out in the blazing sun across a half-mile waste of red clay. For a moment, crossing that sun-baked desert, with only the vaguest notion of where I was going, I felt more alone than Robinson Crusoe and his man Friday. They, at least, could talk to each other. After futile efforts to speak to the half dozen Indians I met, I somehow found the Eurasian woman. She let me have a vacant room that opened directly off her café dining-room,

through glass doors and draggled lace curtains. We chased scrawny chickens and turkeys out from under the *charpoy* (bed), and I took a long, long drink of water. She said it had been boiled. I doubted it, but was too thirsty to care. While eating a greasy curry, I heard a curiously familiar sound. My landlady's Irish husband was cranking a reluctant Overland. He ran a 'jitney' service—sometimes—and later took me to the Congress grounds, three miles away. Inches deep in fine red dust, we rattled past an endless line of gayly painted *tongas*, pulled by bullocks with brass-tipped horns and sky-blue beads around their necks.

The Irishman offered to wait while I looked around, so I wandered through the mushroom town built for the Congress which was to open on the following day. It was a shining, honey-colored city; pale yellow bamboo posts and arches at the street crossings, acres of walls and roofs of yellow matting, the color of ripe wheat. The main street was perhaps four blocks long with a double line of booths. Each one framed a squatting merchant and his wares—stacks of sweets, bottles of bright pink and green soda water; trays of jewelry, anklets, bracelets, nose-rings as large around as a silver dollar with pendent rubies and emeralds; endless displays of *khadi* (home-spun), the typical coarse, unbleached cotton worn by Gandhi and his followers; *khadi* dyed in flashing orange, vermilion, henna, the brilliant red and green of the Congress colors. An endless procession crowded by like the Grand March of a fabulous Artists' Ball and, in pass-

ing, stirred a dust that powdered their brilliant turbans and shawls with the soft yellow-red of the clay.

Reluctantly, I remembered my waiting Overland, and turned back. I was gone just half an hour. When I returned, the car had disappeared. No one would or could speak English. The quick tropical darkness was sifting down like fine soot. An endless line of *tongas* still streamed into the grounds. I found a field where they tethered bullocks for the night. Scores of men were unharnessing and rubbing down their bullocks. They all shrugged and looked blank when, with elaborate pantomime and proffers of *rupees*, I tried to induce them to take me back to the village. Another half hour, and it would be quite dark. In desperation I set out to walk the three and a half miles back to my Café de Luxe, for that was its grotesque name.

I had been walking for perhaps ten minutes, when half a dozen *tongas* passed me going in my direction. They were all crowded with Indians except the last, which had only three passengers. It stopped in answer to my frantic signals. No one spoke English, but I presumed it was bound for the station and, when I had safely arrived there, I decided that it would be easier to walk the rest of the way than to attempt to direct the driver. So once more that day, this time in the dark, I set off across the red clay desert to my Café de Luxe.

The sound of a wheezy phonograph greeted me, as I came up through the black shadows of trees surrounding the Café. I looked in and saw half a dozen Scotch

soldier boys in green plaid trousers dancing the Highland fling, and celebrating Christmas with the Café's greasy dinner. It was all so much like the play, *Rain* —the fat, hardworking Eurasian woman, the good-for-nothing white husband, the soldier boys, the Victrola. I laughed as I realized the only part left for me, and stole around to the kitchen door. The Eurasian woman, shouting at her patient Indian servants, turned with motherly interest, and showed me a back way to my room. She even brought me a length of cotton print to pin over the coarse lace curtains in the glass doors. I put out my light and undressed in what darkness there was. The two French windows were so swollen that they did not even meet. There was only the flimsiest catch on the glass doors. But I was too tired to care. The night was cool and the darkness grateful. I crawled in under the mosquito net and was lulled off to sleep by lonely Scotch lads singing Harry Lauder's "She's Ma Daisy."

Pundits and Pundals

THE Indian National Congress met in a vast *pundal* or tent of homespun *khadi.* There were no chairs. The ground was covered with coarse *khadi,* and divided off into wedge-shaped sections by strips of *khadi.* The delegates were seated by states and provinces, each group had different colored admission cards, and different entrances. The crowds were excellently handled. Fifteen thousand delegates, barefooted, carrying their sandals in their hands, found their places, and squatted in the closely filled sections. More of the delegates spoke English than any one of their many languages. So, much as it irked them, the proceedings were in English.

For four dollars I bought a visitor's card, and was shown into the women's section. About 1,500 women sat here, most of them nursing babies. I spent the first afternoon among them, smiling at their babies, picking up shreds of conversation. I was surprised and delighted that so many of the delegates were liberal enough to permit their wives to attend a political meeting, and to sit in view of the men delegates.

The next morning, I sent my card to Mrs. Sarojini Naidu on the speaker's dais. She is the most prominent woman in India. Educated in England, nationally beloved as a poet, she is a power in Nationalist politics.

She succeeded Gandhi as President of the Congress, an incredible achievement in this land of veiled women. She is handsome and vital, with flashing eyes and a commanding presence. She did not know me, and I could only introduce myself as an American woman, traveling in India, who desired to meet her. It was all that was necessary. She had me brought to the dais where I sat near her during the rest of the Congress.

I found her a difficult person to talk to, always reading letters or making notes or thinking about something else while I spoke to her, and answering in monosyllables when I tried to draw her out. Yet she was kindness itself in looking out for me, and introduced me to all the *pundits* and celebrities of the movement: Pundit Motilal Nehru, fastidious and distinguished, looking like an European financier in fancy dress; the Ali brothers, leaders of the Moslem Nationalists, fat, black-bearded Santa Clauses; Lajpat Rai who had spent years of political exile in New York City; Mrs. Annie Besant, a white-haired and stately old English lady; C. R. Das, tall and broad shouldered, wrapped in a homespun toga, whose deliberateness of bearing reminded me of American Indian chieftains I used to see on the frontier army posts of my childhood. C. R. Das was then Mayor of Calcutta and, next to Gandhi, the most powerful man in the country. His death the following summer was a tragic one for India.

While the Congress deliberated, several other organizations met in smaller *pundals*. I sped back and forth among them. Next to the Congress, the most

important was the National Social Conference where I met Sir Sankaran Nair who delivered the Presidential address; G. K. Devadhar of the Servants of India Society; and K. Natarajan whom I had already met in Bombay.

The two groups, although they work in harmony, put a different emphasis on India's needs. The Nationalists are primarily political. At that time they were committed to Noncoöperation under the leadership of Gandhi, though they had already begun to waver. The Social Conference group feel that India will not be ready for political agitation and organization until she has reformed her glaring social abuses. Meeting the leaders of these two groups at the outset of my travels proved an ideal introduction to Indian life and thought.

When the Conferences and ensuing committee meetings were over, I took the train going further south to Marmugoa in Portuguese India. After my first night in Marmugoa I felt that I had passed my final initiation into the rites of traveling alone.

I arrived after dark. A coolie with a torch led the way across the single railroad track and a narrow plaza and up the magnificent staircase of the Antigo Palaccio. The old palace, built by the Portuguese for their Governor General 400 years ago, when Goa had a flourishing colonial trade, leans in four broad terraces against the vertical slope of a mountain. To-day, the jungle has crept down and covered everything except the Palace and a few *godowns* (storehouses) and mud huts. The tropical night had blotted out the sapphire

bowl of the harbor fringed with palms, but, as we crossed the plaza at the foot of the Palace, I could feel the menace of the jungle.

A second coolie, my luggage piled on his head, made grotesque shadows on the broken planes of the grand staircase which mounts up and up through the center of the building to the top. The lower floors are used for *godowns*, and for the one or two offices still remaining to Goa—the British Consulate, and the office of a line of freighters. The top floor of the old palace is Marmugoa's only hotel. A polite Goanese Indian boy led me down the veranda to my room. It was vast, high ceiled, befitting a palace. It had no windows. Shuttered swinging doors with broad empty spaces above and below, like an old-fashioned saloon's, gave on the veranda. Folded back against the wall were ponderous, floor-to-ceiling, double doors. If I closed them, I shut out all ventilation. I gave them a tentative pull. They were rusty and stuck.

"Have no afraids," the boy assured me, "leave doors open, *Memsahib*, all right." He turned down my bed, arranged the mosquito net, and put a tiny oil lamp on a stool in the primitive bath-house opening off my room.

"*Memsahib* leave this light all night," he told me, with the kindly reassurance of a nurse comforting a child.

In the Bombay hotel, surrounded by Europeans and with a lock on the door, I had felt quite secure. In Belgaum, there was no lock on the glass doors, and

TWO-DECK CAMEL CARTS OF THE PUNJAB

TYPICAL LEISURELY VILLAGE STREET IN AGRA LYING IN THE SHADOW OF THE TAJ MAHAL

the other doors would not even close. But the presence of the Eurasian woman gave me some feeling of security. Here in this shadowy old palace it was different. I stood for a time looking out into the dark jungle. I felt a bit squeamish, but I was tired and sleepy. I went to bed and slept. In the morning, I found the little night lamp lying on the bath-house floor, its chimney broken. Some animal, straying under my swinging doors, must have knocked it over during the night. I had not heard a sound. I was amused at my precautions. After that I always slept with doors open in southern India, nor was I ever disturbed.

STANDARDS

Understanding India

India has been condemned by unsympathetic critics as a degenerate and decadent nation. The afflictions of Indian women, the illiteracy of men and women, cruelty to animals, and lack of sanitation are the more spectacular indictments. I could match all the current gossip as to Indian misery with incidents from the police court blotters of any Western nation. Looking back a few generations, the chronicles of our ancestors in the Middle Ages closely parallel India's present status. I should hesitate to describe as decadent a stage of civilization from which we, ourselves, have only recently emerged!

Holinshed's *Chronicles of England* in the sixteenth century comment on the luxurious trend of the time. Old men remarked on the appearance of many chimneys; stoves were not generally used in their youth. Beds were another innovation; previously, people had lain on straw with blocks of wood for pillows. Until the introduction of knives in the middle sixteenth century our forefathers ate with their fingers. Forks were not used until a century later.

Cleanliness and sanitation are very modern ideas to which, in many cases, we do no more than lip service. The stockyards of Chicago as described in Upton Sinclair's *Jungle;* the nauseating filth in the cellar kitchens

of some of our smartest restaurants, as revealed during waiters' strikes; dairy farm scandals;—such shocking exposés succeed one another. As I write, I see in the morning paper that the Commissioner of Health of New York City is closing nearly a dozen candy factories as the result of an investigation made by the Consumers' League.

Municipal sanitation is only about one hundred years old, even in the West. Sidewalks are a modern invention. An open sewer crossed the city of Boston until 1820. Even to-day, the Illinois River valley for many miles is contaminated by the sewage of the city of Chicago. During the Middle Ages, the streets of Paris and London were narrow, crooked, unpaved, unlighted and unclean, with open ditches for sewers which frequently overflowed. Cardinal Wolsey, passing through the streets of sixteenth-century London to Westminster Abbey, carried an orange in which he had put a sponge soaked in vinegar and spices. When the stench of the streets was overpowering, he held the orange to his nose. Our medieval streets, like those of India, were overrun with beggars. There were 10,000 beggars wandering over England until the passage of the Poor Law in 1601.

Indians have been severely criticized for their cruelty to animals, an abuse the more inconsistent because in India all animals are sacred. The Middle Ages can match the Hindu's cruelty to animals with an even more parodoxical custom of hideous cruelty to man. Torture was used as an instrument of the law, both

for punishment and to extract confessions, throughout most of Europe until the early nineteenth century. It still survives unofficially in third-degree methods, such as beating with a rubber hose.

The use of torture reached its height in England under Queen Elizabeth; during the latter part of her reign, the rack in the Tower seldom stood idle. The Christian Church used torture for centuries. The Spanish Inquisition probably surpassed all the annals of barbarism in the ingenuity and refinement of its cruelty. The famous rules of Torquemada and Valdés for the use of torture were issued in the fifteenth century, the latter forming the code of the Holy Office. It was not until 1816, only a little over a century ago, that a papal Bull officially ended its endorsement by the Roman Church.

India's likeness to our own Middle Ages goes deeper than manners and customs. The two have similar religious and social backgrounds. The Medieval Church was powerful and often corrupt. It exploited superstition by such devices as necromancy and love potions. It bitterly opposed the abolition of its rituals for trial by ordeal.

The most significant resemblance between India and Medieval Europe is their subservience to custom and tradition. India's most serious handicap is her bondage to tradition, her inability to escape from precedent and the dead hand of the past. In the Middle Ages in Europe, as in India to-day, the mass of the people were illiterate, nobles as well as peasants. There were

few written laws. In case of dispute, men followed the custom of the locality. When in doubt, they called a meeting of the oldest inhabitants who gave their recollection of precedents. Robinson and Beard, in their *Development of Modern Europe*, describe this attitude in terms that apply to India to-day:

"Until the opening of the eighteenth century, the former times were commonly held to have been better than the present, for the evils of the past were little known, while those of the present were, as always, only too apparent. Men looked backward rather than forward. That they might excel the achievements of their predecessors did not occur to them.

"It was mainly to the patient men of science that the Western world owed its first hopes of future improvement. In the Middle Ages, the scholars and learned men had been but little interested in the world about them. They devoted far more attention to philosophy and theology than to what we should call the natural sciences."

When the Middle Ages ended about 1500, the East, with her background of thousands of years of civilization, stood far ahead of the barbarous West in refinement of life. Her craftsmanship, her appreciation of beautiful things, the standards of her connoisseurs, were vastly more sophisticated and cultivated. Suddenly, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the West began to sail around the world, and to develop its genius for adapting bits of alien cultures to its own use. Borrowing, among other things, paper, printing and

gunpowder from the East, it proceeded to build a new civilization. With its materialistic interest in things and facts, it has perfected inventions for the use of steam, electricity, and machinery which have revolutionized Western life, and sent it spurting ahead at a rate of acceleration which has no parallel in the history of the world.

If an impartial observer could look at the world to-day in its perspective to the past, the remarkable thing would be, not India's medieval culture, but the highly organized speeding up of our Western civilization. Henry Adams, in his *Education*, bemoans the chaotic effect of this 'acceleration of vertiginous violence.' A few more centuries of progress at our present rate would lead to a condition which is unthinkable —a delirium. Indian mystics probably think that we are already mad!

Although Indians lay claim to startling scientific achievements during their Golden Age several thousand years ago, their present civilization is one peculiarly lacking in scientific consciousness. Just as they are free from the Western bondage to a sense of time, they show little concern with material facts. It was the 'patient men of science' who emancipated the West from thralldom to old wives' tales. The lack of such men and their inventions leaves India loitering in the ruts of the Middle Ages.

The illiteracy of ninety-two per cent of the Indian people exerts an influence so powerful and all-pervasive that it can scarcely be overemphasized. Paralleling the

development of science and machinery in the West, the illiterate masses, who through the centuries made their mark with an X, have suddenly learned to read and write. Widespread adaptation of machinery and scientific procedure would scarcely have been possible otherwise. Hindu culture was based on the old aristocratic theory of educating a small privileged class. British culture, when it took India over, made use of the same expedient for its own purposes. The Indian masses have never had a chance.

India's geographical isolation has been an important factor in cutting her off from modern influences. The West, fighting and traveling back and forth across Europe, had the stimulus of constant contact with varying cultures. India is virtually a separate continent with an area equal to the whole of Europe, excluding Russia. The impenetrable Himalayas form her northern boundaries. The rest is 3,400 miles of sea coast. The Khyber Pass, a wind-swept notch in the mountains on her northwestern corner, is the only land passage in and out of India.

India has more than three times our population, 320 millions, one-fifth of all the people in the world. Three-quarters of these, 230 millions, are Hindus. They speak at least ten distinct languages besides many dialects. Perhaps India's division into castes is even more disruptive than her confusion of tongues. The four main castes are only the major components. There are, according to the Census, some 2,300 caste

divisions, based on differences of blood, occupation, religious and social tradition. They observe various degrees of exclusion, the chief prohibitions being against intermarriage and eating together. Outside the pale of the castes stand 60 million 'Untouchables,' less than any caste, literally outcastes. Isolated from the rest of the world, and broken into disparate segments, India has intensified her segregation by the arrogance of her caste system. It was a sin to cross the ocean, or to have social relations with foreigners—prejudices which are only now beginning to give way.

Another influence which has reënforced India's apathy to our Western materialism was her bondage to the past, and her fatalistic acceptance of the present, products of the inscrutable forces of heredity and environment.

We did not achieve our own emancipation easily. Church and state combined to excommunicate the pioneers of liberal thought and burn them at the stake. India has reënforced the authority of custom and tradition with religious sanction. This authority, combined with the autocracy and fatalism of the caste system, has made it impossible for man to rebel. Before the days of railroads and easy travel, a man outcasted could only starve to death. There has been no chance for a Francis Bacon in India. Countless minor considerations have contributed toward this 'cultural lag,' a phrase of Professor Ogburn's which seems especially devised for India. Among these are the influences of a tropical

climate, 'the blazing sun and enervating rains,' and of a vegetarian diet to slow up and soften the edge of both thought and action.

Perhaps the West's main difficulty in understanding India has been failure to appreciate her consistent medievalism. We find some relics of the Middle Ages picturesque: its handicraft, its folkways, its village festivals. We abhor its dirt and disease. India charms travelers one minute, and horrifies them the next.

Indian fatalism and indifference to material things have made it inevitable that religion should assume major importance. Religion and illiteracy are the most powerful influences in India to-day. Custom, tradition and religion have become practically synonymous. Somewhere in the Hindu Scriptures every detail of daily life is codified and prescribed.

Hindu civilization has withstood the buffeting of thirty centuries with only superficial changes. It is one of the oldest things in the historical world. But Western inventions—railroads, telegraph, radio—have finally penetrated even the Himalayas. Will Hindu civilization, stripped of its age-long isolation, follow the West, or will it develop a new culture of its own?

Likes and Dislikes

After leaving the Portuguese settlement of Goa, I crossed southern India, and saw the old Dravidian temples of the far South. I traveled up the eastern coast to Darjeeling on the borders of Thibet; then across northern India to Lahore in the northwestern corner; and then, back and forth, across central India visiting the Indian states. Altogether, I traveled over 6,000 miles in trains, motors, *ekkas, garrys, tongas,* and on the backs of elephants and camels.

I shall not attempt to follow my trip in sequence, because travel notes are necessarily fragmentary. I want rather to describe the conditions which seemed to me significant, such as: the power of Hinduism; disabilities of women; problems of 'Untouchables' and of Hindu-Muslim antagonism; efforts of progressive Indians toward reform and change; distinctions between the Indian states and British India.

My own introduction to India, my first impressions, were concerned chiefly with picturesque differences of standards between East and West. I have always considered myself comparatively free from prejudice. I was surprised to discover that I was startled, and sometimes shocked, by deviations from what are merely artificial conventions. I came to feel that a potent cause of misunderstanding between the two sides of the world

lies in superficial standards of living, of manners, of housekeeping—familiar customs, subtle, intimate things which every civilization takes for granted.

I had not realized the importance of our instinct for conformity until I felt its violation. The emotional extravagance in advertisements of books of etiquette is perhaps justified: "He nearly died with shame because he did not know which fork to use!" Surprised by my own tendency to measure Eastern customs by Western standards, I realized how much more of a barrier such differences in tradition must constitute between Briton and Indian. For to most Englishmen, conformity and good form are as the breath of life.

These differences in values, esthetic standards, personal habits, unconscious mannerisms, formed the background of all my experiences and impressions. I shall try to describe some of them as an essential first step in *Understanding India.*

I spent a week-end at Santiniketan, the poet Rabindranath Tagore's school, with its scattering of Japanese, Scandinavians, and other disciples from distant lands. The school grounds cover many acres, with charming vistas of thatched roofs and weather-beaten walls against groves of mango trees. In the cool dawn the students spread their prayer rug on a narrow bit of ground between a carpenter's bench and a smelly barnyard. A handsome, white-bearded Hindu squatted at one end of the rug, his audience facing him, with eyes shut, heads bowed, praying in silence. I suppose none of them were conscious of anything material. They

were absorbed in meditation. Such indifference is characteristic.

I do not imply that Hindus lack susceptibility. On moonlight nights at the Taj, amid the ruins of forgotten cities, on the *ghats* (steps) beside the sacred rivers, I always found them squatting in a circle round one who recited softly legends of their gods and goddesses. They show the greatest sensitiveness to beauty, but they combine with it a capacity for ignoring disorder and filth which marks a radical difference between Indian esthetic standards and our own.

At first I was surprised and puzzled by the fundamental differences in standards of home decoration and housekeeping traditions. In palaces and wealthy homes there is a strong Western influence, chiefly late Victorian. Elaborately carved furniture, tufted in brilliant brocades, is the height of elegance. I saw glass furniture in the state apartments of most of the Indian palaces I visited. The massive parlor chairs are made of heavy pressed glass instead of wood; the red velvet upholstery is corded down through holes in the glass. A refulgent glass bar, or pole, hangs from the ceiling to which the royal *punkah* is attached. A glass receptacle like an enormous goldfish tank awaits royal canes and parasols. There are even beds and tables and sofas of glass, deeply grooved and cross-cut, like the punch bowls in the window of a cheap restaurant. They all come from Belgium. When the Prince of Wales and the Viceroy and the highest in the land tour India, they repose in glass bedsteads, and sit on glass chairs.

Indians are curiously unsuccessful in their attempts to use our Western decorations. A drawing-room in a Southern city was furnished with fine old rugs, period furniture, paintings of distinguished ancestors and British officials, and Chinese porcelains. Among the carved and gilded armchairs, covered in needle-point, stood common cane-seated oak chairs. On an onyx and brass table—the sort that soap companies used to give as premiums—stood a commonplace French china nude.

I have on my wall a Chinese poster, picked up in Peking, such as the Chinese paste on the gateposts of their compounds to ward off evil spirits. They cost a fraction of a cent. I imagine that a Chinese, seeing it mixed in with my other pictures, would find it as incongruous as I found the factory-made chairs and the onyx table in India. I told myself that it was only fair to judge the Indians by their achievements in their own art. But even here, they do not discriminate.

A Parsi who has a British title and a magnificent London home has built a marble palace in Bombay. Cheap white wooden balconies and trimmings make the façade of this house completely ordinary. A round oak clock of the commercial type is fastened to the wall opposite the front door. Contact with the West seems to have demoralized their artistic sense. Many of the recent buildings are grotesque, the Jain temple in Calcutta for example, and the Husainabad Imambara in Lucknow.

In most wealthy Indian homes there is little effort

PEOPLE OF UDAIPUR WAITING TO SEE THEIR MAHARANA AND HIS COURT PASS IN FULL DURBAR

BEAUTIFUL LAKE PICHOLA, WITH THE ANCIENT PALACE OF UDAIPUR, HOME OF THE OLDEST RULING DYNASTY IN THE WORLD

to keep things up, and the resulting disorder adds to the incongruous effect. Dying marigolds in clay pots gave a neglected look to the veranda of a prominent merchant and philanthropist living in Lahore. Two dusty flat-topped desks filled the anteroom. I was led through several small rooms, crowded with furniture, into a parlor about twelve feet square. Half a dozen chairs and a sofa so filled the room that I had almost to climb over them. The furniture was upholstered in dirty pink rep, with horsehair showing through the corners. Faded curtains of cheap chintz hung in the doors. A piece of green felt, nailed across the mantel, had worn through on the corners, showing the board of the mantelpiece. Chromos of half-draped women hung on the walls. The owner of this home is a delightful person. He has done untold good in a cause obnoxious to orthodox Hinduism. He has been knighted by the *raj*. He keeps up a comfortable establishment, with large grounds, plenty of servants, several automobiles. Yet he feels no urge either to make his home attractive, or to require his servants to keep things clean and in repair.

Slovenliness increases down the social scale. Indians educated in Europe frequently introduce Western customs on their return home, such as what they call 'high table practice,' the use of a dining-room table and chairs. I often saw soiled dishes and spotted table cloths left on tables between meals in homes where there were many servants.

The Indian's instinctive asceticism offsets the de-

moralization of attempts to imitate Western customs. Their simplicity of life fascinated me. In the average one-room mud hut of the peasant there are no windows, no chimney, and only one door. They use an outdoor fireplace, like a camp fire, excepting during the rains, when they cook on a hearth. The smoke fills the room like a black fog. They use no furniture. They sit, eat and sleep on the ground.

Their clothes are so simple that I rarely saw an Indian woman sewing. There are no buttons, hooks or snappers to come off, no seams to rip. Men's and women's garments are strips of cloth about a yard wide which they wrap about them, rolling the end under much as a 'flapper' rolls her stockings. A woman's *sari*, about ten yards long, hangs full about her waist, forming a skirt, and she draws the end over her head like a shawl. The man's *dhoti* measures four yards. He drapes it around his waist, and passes one end between his legs, making loosely draped drawers. Children wear no clothes until they are five or six. Only effete imitators of the West wear socks—think of no stockings to mend!

I saw lamps and candles only in the cities. The peasants rise at dawn and go to bed with the dark. At first it puzzled me when traveling that I seemed never to pass any villages after nightfall. When the train stopped, except for a torch or lantern on the station platform, there were no lights to be seen. Then I realized that sleeping villages lay all about me, but that they were blotted out from sunset to sunrise.

Boxes, tin cans, bottles are rare. Even wrapping-paper is a luxury. When I bought Indian food in the bazaar, it was slipped into a bowl of green leaves deftly fastened together with bits of twig. The only tin cans in common use are the five-gallon tins from the Standard Oil Company. These, when drained, are a valuable article of household economy. The Indian lays the can on its side and slices off the top. He smoothes the edges, fits it with neat, home-made hinges, a handle and a padlock, and he has a snug little trunk, proof against rain, mold, ants, and vermin. I saw thousands of them in the third-class carriages. At home, they serve as chests for food, clothing, valuables.

All classes eat with their fingers. Leaf plates are thrown away after each meal. It sounds like a housekeeper's dream of paradise: no table linen; no sheets and towels and underwear to wash and iron; no knives and forks and spoons to polish; no dishes to break; no furniture and bric-a-brac to move about and dust; no beds to sweep under; no lamps to clean and fill; no books and magazines to put away; no darning-basket piled high; no machinery to get out of order.

I saw comfortable homes which had escaped the insidious West, and suggested an Oriental version of William Morris. I called on one of the leading men of a Bengal village. Surrounded by a high mud wall, his house was L-shaped, with a kitchen on one side, and two bedrooms across the other wing. This was a luxurious house with a window in each room. A broad plat-

form served as a veranda living-room except during the rains.

They opened the cookhouse door, and let me look in from a distance. It was immaculately clean. The dirt floor was coated with a preparation of cow dung which dries to a hard, glossy finish, and is odorless. There was no furniture. They had scooped some shelves out of the mud wall, and the humps of two clay fireplaces rose from the floor. Brass jars and plates and cups stood on the floor, shining like gold. Copper kettles and long-handled spoons for cooking hung from nails in the wall.

I was invited into the bedrooms. Each had a window, a *charpoy* and a mosquito net. The *charpoy*, or bed, is India's one piece of furniture. It is a wooden frame with ropes or tapes woven back and forth to give a springy surface. It is very light, and is always dragged out for 'European' callers if there are no chairs. An Indian, sitting on one, folds his legs under him; he finds it uncomfortable to let his legs hang down as we do. He usually sits on the floor or ground.

There were bamboo mats on the *charpoys*, but no bedding as it was too hot. The bedrooms had the charm of simplicity. There was one article of luxury in the house, a harmonium. It is like a Salvation Army collapsible street organ, except that the harmonium lies flat on the ground with a bellows at one side. The performer, squatting before it, picks out the tune with one hand and pumps the bellows with the other. For elaborate pieces requiring two hands, some one helps with

the bellows. Harmoniums take the place of pianos in all but ultra-Western homes, and are curiously suited to the will-o'-the-wisp plaintiveness of Hindu music.

The men of the family, some of their friends, and I, squatted on the veranda in the twilight. They sent a servant for fruit. Like a brown spider he scrambled up a coconut palm standing in the compound. I had my first drink of green coconut milk. We ate *papayas* and *mangoes*. Their flavor has for me the same exotic fascination as the fragrance of sandalwood, and the oily smoothness of jade.

I leaned against the wall of the house, and they sat in a smiling, friendly row opposite me. There were no English clothes here. They were dressed in white *dhotis* and shirts or scarves of pongee and homespun. Behind them rose the mud wall of the compound, and a gigantic fringe of coconut palms against a sunset sky.

Somebody suggested the garden. They rose enthusiastically—of course—they had not thought to show me the garden. They led the way across a weedy jungle, proudly pointing out straggling melon vines and bean stalks. Perhaps they missed the hearty ring of appreciation which the simple house had called forth. Perhaps it was not my fault. With characteristic sensitiveness, they may have seen the garden for the first time through other eyes. Their pride wilted from them, and they began to apologize, "I suppose it doesn't look so wonderful to you, there are so many weeds." "Probably in your country you don't have so many weeds in your garden. But you see, we all have malaria here,

and it is so hot; no one has the energy to weed the garden. We do the best we can."

The ground sloped down. Below us lay the tank where this family, and most of the village, got their water—a muddy, stagnant pool, covered with green scum. No wonder they have malaria, and no energy to weed their gardens!

Untidiness is so common that one ceases to notice it. The pride of the conscientious and aggressive good housekeeper would seem much ado about nothing, in India. This carelessness is the more inconsistent because Hindu caste rules are most meticulous about food and drink. A Hindu would be horrified at the thought of a public drinking cup. He never touches his lips to a cup, but tilts his head back, and pours the water into his mouth. A boy squats beside the *bhisti* (sprinkler) in the street. He holds his hands in a funnel shape before his mouth, and the *bhisti* squirts a stream of water into them. Not a drop is spilled. Similarly, when they pass the *hookah* round a circle of men, each curves his fingers into a tube, and draws the smoke up through his hand.

The orthodox Hindu is excessively fastidious about his kitchen. It is part of his religion that only members of his own caste may enter the room, or touch his food and water. I saw beautiful kitchens among all classes; in Brahman homes, among the aborigines, even in the coolie lines of Asansol. Their religion prescribes rituals for the kitchen and for daily bathing, and they observe them punctiliously. Beyond this they are oblivious. They do not even care how dirty may be

the water they wash in, if it has not been ceremonially defiled.

The sacred tanks which furnish the main water supply would be intolerable to us. They serve as reservoirs and are filled during the torrential rains of the monsoon, from June to September. They are rectangular in shape and lined with broad steps so that, as the water recedes, it remains accessible. At certain hours, they are reserved for the use of women. Sacred bulls and the village buffalo lie wallowing along the edge, stirring up slimy mud as they wade in and out.

The young village wife comes to wash her clothes. She is too poor to use soap, but beats the stones with the twisted wet cloth. Presumably this loosens the dirt. She scours her brass and copper bowls with sand and water. Having finished her housekeeping, she slips into the water for her own bath. She splashes herself, rinses her mouth, dries herself with her hands. Towels are unknown. Standing in the water, and with a dexterity that is almost sleight-of-hand, she winds her dry *sari* about her, simultaneously slipping out of the wet one. She fills her tapering brass jar with water, balances it on her head, tucks the other jars under her arms, and glides up the steps, and out of sight through the trees. The water in the jar is the family drinking and cooking supply!

By midwinter, the tanks are usually a disagreeable sight—stagnant, the far side covered with green scum, the near side, a mass of mud and refuse from the continuous use of the village. They must breed quantities

of mosquitoes which work in relays right through the twenty-four hours, spreading malaria and other diseases.

Everywhere, you meet widows, flat wicker baskets on their heads, following cattle in the fields and on the roads. They pick up every scrap of cow dung, mix it with water and clay, knead it into cakes and clap it against their mud walls. The hot sun bakes it into a cake which forms their staple fuel. This custom prevails in many parts of Asia. It is the expedient of poverty. There is no wood left, they have no other fuel. Cow dung piled in a heap by the door is one source of their plague of flies. I can not decide whether I saw more flies in city or country. I saw sick babies in outcaste villages that were a solid black mass of flies. No one uses wire screens. Europeans and wealthy Indians hang mosquito nets over their beds. The rest submit patiently to flies, mosquitoes, and lice.

Bathroom plumbing is almost unknown. In the cities as in the villages, night soil is removed by 'Untouchables'—'Sweepers.' In the slums, gutters down each side of the street serve as open sewers. The streets are narrow, often filled in with overhanging balconies. Little sunlight filters through. The sterilizing sunlight is the greatest protection of the villages. In the cities it has small chance.

Gandhi is keenly alive to the menace of India's lack of sanitation. Some years ago, during an outbreak of plague, he served on a sanitation committee which inspected the latrines of the community. The 'Untouchables' had none at all, and were astonished that they

should be expected to have them. They used the fields. Proceeding up the social scale, conditions grew worse. Gandhi writes, "It was our common experience that the latrines of the rich were more unclean. They were dark and stinking, veritable hells."

Sanitation is an especially difficult problem at fairs and *melas*. The men will not use the facilities provided. In large industrial plants, such as railroad yards, it becomes a serious problem. Systems of fines accomplish little.

Most of these differences between our own and Indian standards are the result of their continuing mysticism and fatalism as contrasted with our modern materialism. This is a practical aspect of what is called Indian spirituality. Indifference to the things of this life and contemplation of the Absolute has its beautiful side, but also its drawbacks. India pays a heavy penalty for her indifference to the material world.

Five Cents a Day

A CARGO boat, dingy white and rust-color, lay alongside the wharf at Marmugoa. From the pleasant shade of the old palace veranda, I watched an endless line of coolies, men and women, thin brown legs and arms and a patch of dull red or dust-colored rag. All day long, under the blazing sun they climbed the gangplank with baskets of manganese iron ore balanced on their heads, turned and jog-trotted down the other plank.

As darkness fell, arc lights blazed and there came a speeding up of tempo. The shouts of the *tolliwallah* (foreman) rose higher like a jazz accompaniment to the rhythmic beat of the coolies' chantey. Far into the night, the bright lights glared, the *tolliwallahs* shouted and cursed, the long line of men and women coolies beat out the endless rhythm of that jog trot, up one gangway, down the other. They were like cogs in an endless moving belt. But they were men and women. They began at seven in the morning, and worked until eleven at night.

"If I'm in a hurry to get under way," said the Captain, "I keep 'em on all night, stowing the cargo in the hold."

For this work which was irregular, depending on cargoes, the Captain said that he paid men and women alike six *annas* (twelve cents) a day. Living is cheaper

for these coolies than it could be outside of the tropics. Their clothing is two rags, a loin cloth and a turban. They sleep on the ground, own no furniture, have no household upkeep. But cereals cost probably twice as much as they did before the War, and wages have not risen in proportion. It must be a tight pinch to bring up a family, even in the tropics, on an irregular twelve cents a day.

Indian Nationalists assert that the standard of living in India is the lowest in the world. For this they blame the British *raj* and the 'Economic Drain.' Whether the average Indian is better or worse off than he was two hundred or a thousand years ago, I do not know, but I do know that he is far from well off to-day.

Figures have a colorless way of stating highly significant facts. In 1926, the average income for all the people of the United States was $2.12 per day. In England, it was half of this amount, $1.15. In India, according to the official British estimate, it was nine cents a day in the city and seven cents in the country, where ninety per cent of the people live. The income of the average peasant is less than seven cents because this figure includes the estates of wealthy *zamindars* (landlords) and the fabulous riches of Indian Princes. Gandhi's research students estimate the typical income at five cents, and this seems a fair figure.

Making allowance for the shifting value of money, the laborers of the Middle Ages were well off in comparison with the Indian peasant of to-day. We should have to delve back into the most primitive annals for

anything comparable to the poverty of the Indian masses. The Pipe Rolls of Henry II of England in the middle of the twelfth century show that wages for common labor averaged four cents a day. The wages of unskilled Indian labor range from eight to fourteen cents a day. The Bengal coal mines pay twelve cents a day to the men coolies, ten cents to women. The cost of living has multiplied many times since the Middle Ages. The four pennies of the feudal serf bought vastly more than the eight to fourteen pennies of the Indian coolie to-day.

I had thought that my months of reading about India had prepared me for her poverty. But I had no conception of the degradation of such poverty until I saw it. I suppose that it is impossible to imagine without observing it, a national standard of living that is not a quarter, or a tenth of one's own, but less than one thirtieth!

A Government investigation of the budgets of 3,000 working-class families in Bombay recently showed that the quantity of cereals (their staple food, as they eat no meat) consumed by them was about equivalent to rations under the Bombay Famine Code, but was less than the scale prescribed for Indian jails. And the average income for cities is two cents higher than in the country! A large proportion of the millions of *ryots* (peasants) have only one meal a day, and never know the sensation of having enough to eat.

The average expectation of life is twenty-three years as compared with fifty-six in this country. Plagues and

filth are partially responsible. But a perpetually hungry, undernourished population furnishes a fertile field for disease.

As I wandered through the bazaars, I realized that a man with excess flesh on his bones was a rare sight. Now and then I saw a fat man lolling in a victoria. But the masses in the city streets and the *ryots* in the villages are painfully thin. Their arms and legs are like broomsticks. With the exception of certain hardy tribes and individuals here and there, the Indian people are small of stature and anemic. In many parts of the *mofussil* (interior) the children, who run naked until they are five or six years old, nearly all have distended stomachs. I thought at first that they were fat little stomachs. But the skin-and-bone legs told another story. Swollen stomachs are a symptom of famine. The Indian *ryot's* children have swollen stomachs when there is no famine.

I wondered that there should be no dump heaps on the edge of Indian villages until I realized that they have almost no refuse. The *ryot's* life is so gaunt that he has nothing except green leaf plates and fruit rinds to throw away. The simple life loses its charm abruptly when it passes the point of nonessentials and involves hunger and bitter discomfort.

The effects of such poverty are brutalizing. I am familiar with the squalid tenements of our industrial centers. But I was shocked when I saw the one-room huts and the *chawls* (tenements) in which ninety per cent of Bombay mill workers live. During the dry season, most of the men sleep outdoors, and the streets

are white with sleeping figures wrapped in their *dhotis*. What becomes of them during the rains, when they have to pack themselves into their tiny huts, it is impossible to imagine.

Dark-skinned, wearing only a loin cloth, as they squatted in the filth with their children, they scarcely looked like human beings.

Unconsidered Trifles

Love and hate transcend analysis. I often like or dislike people at sight, before I know a thing about them. The unfamiliar usually piques and allures me. It may affect others as unpleasant, sinister, immoral. Any change of fashion such as short hair and short skirts for women calls forth shrieks of pain from the conservatives until the novelty wears off: then they denounce as bitterly the next innovation

I think this repulsion for the unfamiliar may play a large part in the misunderstandings of East and West. We have tidy little pigeonholes for the variations of our Western world. We take for granted the stolidity of the Teuton, the excited gesticulations of the Latin, the reserve of the Englishman.

Meeting a new set of variations, we show little adaptability. The applied psychology of the modern 'go-getting' salesman emphasizes the importance of first impressions. In India I was increasingly aware of these subtle differences. Oddities of manner may seem trivial but, when they are enmeshed in associations, they color all our impressions.

I was in a Hindu home. My host sent for his daughter, and said that he wished her to take me for a drive, to visit places of interest which he named. As he mentioned them, she said nothing but tossed her head from

side to side as though to say, "I don't want to do it." I was amazed. This willful gesture was so inconsistent with the respect shown by Hindu girls both to fathers and to guests. Later I observed that this gesture of tossing the head sideways corresponds to our bowing the head forward in token of submission.

The Indian's own clothes are charming, but his efforts to adopt European dress are often grotesque. A favorite costume begins with a *dhoti.* This is the loosely draped short drawers effect previously described. He copies the European shirt, even to collar band and shirt-tails, with a fancy collar button but no collar or tie. With this, he wears European shoes and socks, held up by Boston garters fastened round his bare brown legs. The first time you meet this figure walking calmly down the street carrying an umbrella, you gasp and feel sure it is one of those nightgown and B. V. D. dreams! When this apparition rises to make a long impassioned speech, it is difficult not to laugh. This costume has infinite variations. At a delightful dinner-party, one man wore a *dhoti* with bare legs and sandals, a collarless European shirt with stiff cuffs, a ruby collar button, and an European waistcoat of black alpaca.

Big black cotton umbrellas carry great prestige. They protect against the sun, and also against night dews of which the Indian is much more fearful. I remember one hot twilight in southern India, meeting an Indian on the edge of a paddy field. Dressed in a loin cloth, shoes, socks and garters, he was riding a bicycle and carrying an open umbrella.

Personal habits are another artificial pattern. They normally vary from one country to another, and yet they serve to form a barrier. We are accustomed to judge people by certain arbitrary conventions. A well-bred person does this and does not do that. Suddenly our own conventions must be discarded: it is surprisingly difficult.

An Indian official took me to his home for afternoon tea. It was an enchanting palace, hundreds of years old. He led the way to a shaded veranda and a rippling fountain, enclosed in rose-covered walls. A box had just arrived by express. Servants brought out from the wrappings two elaborate layer cakes from a Calcutta caterer, with whom my host had a standing order. He did not join me in drinking tea, but took an orange. The butler served the orange on a plate with a fruit knife. But the Minister as he talked let the peelings fall on the floor!

Irresponsibility is an annoying trait, and Indians seemed to me conspicuously irresponsible. They go on the principle that lateness does not matter. This is pleasant—except for the person who is waiting.

I was once driving with a Prince of a reigning house in an Indian state. Between the prison and town, in a stretch of underbrush, I saw a fire and remarked on it. The Prince paid no attention, and we drove around sight-seeing for several hours. The next morning I learned that soldiers had been called out at midnight, and kept out the rest of the night to fight the fire.

Some Indians have the same irresponsibility about

making promises. Courtesy leads them to make offers which prove to be inconvenient. They do not bother to notify you of a change of plan. They just do not appear. Since the favor would have been voluntary, it is not possible to reproach them. But if one has based one's program on such plans, it is annoying to have them vanish into thin air.

Indians do not have our code of fastidiousness about personal habits. Unless subject to Western influences, they are likely to ignore many conventions which make for physical nicety with us. They hawk, spit, pick their noses, wipe them on a corner of their *dhoti,* or belch, all quite without embarrassment.

In case of violating caste rules, such as that against crossing the ocean, the upper castes have a ceremonial called *panchagavia.* It involves swallowing a mixture of the five products of the sacred cow, milk, curds, butter and the two excreta. Many Hindus no longer observe this ritual but, in the West, extravagant criticism has been focused upon it. I have twice in the last year heard of cases in our own rural communities of using cow dung as a medical remedy. The last case was that of a Pennsylvania Dutch farmer in the Stiegel glass district whose wife had ulcer of the stomach. Among other remedies, he gave her a daily potion of a strong tea brewed from fresh cow dung. The poor woman died.

A habit which must annoy Englishmen, who go to the other extreme, is the tendency of Indian men to coddle themselves. I saw a young Indian, educated in Eng-

land, hold a glass of iced water against his forehead for some minutes at the dinner-table in a Delhi hotel. Putting it down, he sank his head in his hand with a low moan. The women of the party—for he belonged to an emancipated group who had abandoned *purdah*—were most sympathetic. A few minutes later, when something interested him, he was talking with as much animation as any of them. One of the most intellectually alert men I met in India, a young Brahman in his thirties, came to call sniffing a bottle of smelling salts. He had a headache he said, and was as unembarrassed by the green bottle in his hand as the heroine of a Victorian novel. Indians cough with an almost hysterical abandon. When I first landed, I thought them all in the last stages of tuberculosis. I got the impression, though it is only an impression, that many of them are subject to the same tendencies that keep a hypochondriac forever counting his pulse and taking his temperature. I suspect that they are a nation of introverts.

I had to be on my guard not to hurt the feelings of both men and women. They are surprisingly sensitive, and often respond to a casual remark with apologies and explanations that are embarrassing. Most of the unattractive traits of the average *babu* (clerk) are the outcome of an inferiority complex which has various contributing causes: the tropical climate, vegetarian diet, poverty, child marriage and poor heredity. Whatever the cause, the effect is one of lack of vigor.

With numerous individual exceptions, Indian men gave me an impression of effeminacy. The contrast

between their dress and habits and Western standards of masculinity is no doubt partly responsible. Their full draped *dhotis*, in some sections reaching to the ground, look more like an old-fashioned draped skirt than anything we associate with men. *Rajahs* in full dress wear as many strings of pearls, anklets and necklaces as a dancing girl.

Consciousness of being a subject nation contributes to the inferiority complex. The offer of thousands of volunteers for the late war was refused by the British *raj*, which accepted only money and the services of the regular Indian soldiers. They suffer from consciousness of color. It is commonly believed that a woman who leads an exemplary life may hope to be reborn a man. A man may aspire in his next life to be a white man. Mothers refer to a dark-skinned child with disappointment and pity. There is also the influence of the lower middle-class British official. He is frequently overbearing and arrogant.

Indian women are the victims of so many abuses that I hesitate to blame them for anything. They are heroic to face life at all. I remember the tired droop of their little bodies, loaded down with bundles and babies, following their lords through the haze of heat and dust that is an Indian *mela*. I shrink from criticizing the very quality on which I know that they pride themselves. Yet we censure the same attitude in our own mothers. In recent years, the sacred autocracy of mother love has been challenged. An excessively emotional relationship, no matter how good the intentions,

usually injures the child. In her blind, unselfish devotion, the chief fault of the Indian mother is that she too completely sacrifices herself.

Watching them coddle and pet their little boys, I wondered if this did not have something to do with the men's tendency to coddle themselves in later life. I think this influence may run still deeper and tend to turn the men in upon themselves, give them an introvert slant, and contribute to their sense of inferiority. I often saw mothers carrying on their hips boys almost as large as themselves. One boy, old enough to have a mouthful of teeth, casually climbed around his mother as though she were a tree, pulled her breast out from under her *sari,* and began nursing. The hope that prolonged lactation will prevent conception is no doubt partly responsible. But it is more an expression of the prolonged and intense bond between mother and son.

Of all their manners and customs, the one that I could least accept was the attitude of many Indians toward their women. Whether the man or woman shall have precedence in passing through a door is a trivial matter. In India the man goes first. He says that he goes ahead to protect the woman. Yet he stands back as we do to let his Princes and high officials go first.

I remember a picture which every traveler sees scores of times. The train stops at a remote village station. With shouts and confusion a *zamindar* is squeezed out of the crowded third-class carriage, followed by his wife and his tin trunks. A coolie balances the trunks on his head. The wife shifts her baby from one hip to

the other, and picks up a big bundle tied in a scarlet shawl. The *zamindar* pats down the skirt of his black alpaca frock coat, ruffled by the crowded carriage. He raises his umbrella and, without a look behind, leads off. A mile across the red desert, a low brown curve against the skyline shows the village that is their home. As the train slowly pulls away, their silhouettes stand out against the cracked red earth, the pompous little *zamindar* under his umbrella, coat tails flapping; the naked brown coolie under his pile of painted trunks; the tired figure of the woman, one hip curved out to hold her child, a bulging scarlet bundle weighting her down on the other side.

Simplicity

THERE is a simplicity about Indian men and women, a modesty, almost diffidence, that has great charm. Their voices are softer than ours, their manners more gentle. They live at a slower, more graceful tempo. They have the ceremonious consideration and courtesy of an old civilization. The poise and dignity of the older people is impressive. The women carry themselves like queens and, in their homes, they give the passing Western woman a dazzling glimpse of the possibilities of the Eternal Feminine.

The masses have better manners than ours. I watched them wandering through old palaces, gardens and tombs. A group of young men, squatting to enjoy a view, were quiet and decorous. There was none of the wild and strident horseplay of our holiday crowds.

Even when the young men do let go, as during the *Holi Puja,* the gayest festival of the Hindu year, they are not as boisterous as our election-night crowds. Young men dress up in women's clothes and, with an escort of other youths, roam the streets. They sing Hindu songs to the staccato of drum and cymbals, and squirt red water over each other through bamboo blow pipes, much as we throw confetti. I was told that, after dark, they become much more boisterous, but I did not happen to see anything of the sort.

At the time of the festival I was in Asansol, a great industrial center. Driving along the Grand Trunk Road, I met three middle-aged men, singing, as they walked, to a drum and cymbals. The third man had an iron crowbar, the end turned over in a small crook. He had a second piece of iron shaped like a small U. By holding the crook either loose or tight he played a scale of half a dozen notes.

Further along, a close-packed group of men under a lean-to were singing. Some twenty men sat in a crowded circle. In the center were two drummers and six or eight cymbals. They swayed as one body, and sang lustily, an infinite succession of verses to a short, monotonously recurring tune. Under the low roof, the effect of the massed men, the syncopation of the drums, the shrill staccato of the cymbals, the pulsing volume of men's voices in this simple recurring tune, were almost hypnotic. My interpreter questioned them. They were men of the blacksmith caste, from Agra and Allahabad way, wandering about over the holidays. This was the way they amused themselves.

Indian simplicity has the same naïve charm as a child's. Women would feel of the material of my wash-silk dresses. They always wanted to know whether I was married, and how many children I had. Educated Indians and men of position showed this same naïveté. The Prime Minister of an Indian state, within a few minutes of meeting me, asked how old I was; whether the pearls I wore were real; how much my husband made a year; whether my husband and I loved

each other and, if so, how I happened to leave him and come to India alone! Gandhi, in his *Autobiography*, refers to this habit of asking questions. When he first landed in England as a law student, an older friend coached him: "Do not touch other people's things. Do not ask questions as we usually do in India on first acquaintance. Never address people as Sir."

This simplicity is the antithesis of our attitude. Our ideal is to appear sophisticated and indifferent. I found the lack of affectation delightful. Even in the matter of eating with the fingers, while I did not acquire facility in this custom, I appreciated a spirit which abolished dish washing.

Indian simplicity and asceticism spring from the same roots. Asceticism has been carried to an extreme that makes it an economic menace. But in individual cases, it is profoundly impressive. C. R. Das and Pundit Motilal Nehru were the two men who organized the *Swaraj* party within the National Congress, and hastened the inevitable failure of Gandhi's boycotts. Both men were lawyers, among the most successful in India, making incomes of several thousand dollars a month—fabulous incomes for that country. When Gandhi called for a boycott of British courts as part of the non-coöperation program, both men closed their desks, and vowed never to take another fee. They made over their entire property to the Movement. Pundit Motilal Nehru, in particular, had lived in princely luxury. They reserved for themselves small monthly pensions, just enough to live in the simplest way.

If Elihu Root or Judge Hughes were to take such a step, it would, I imagine, hurt them rather than add to their prestige. The American public would be convinced that they had become neurotic or senile. In India, the result was just the opposite. Sacrifice of all material interests convinced the people of the *Swaraj* leaders' devotion. It multiplied many times their power to influence their own people. Apparently it made no impression on the British in India since they used to describe the two men as scheming politicians and demagogues.

Their story is not exceptional. By the winter of 1927 early enthusiasm for *Swaraj* had cooled. The Movement had slowed down to a very sober pace. V. J. Patel was elected President of the Legislative Assembly at Delhi, with a salary of $1,208 a month. This is one of the highest offices open to an Indian. Finding that, after meeting the expenses of his position, he could live on about $666 a month, he notified Gandhi that he would turn over to the Nationalist cause the balance of $542 each month, and as much more as he could spare. The gift was not announced for many months because of Mr. Patel's insistence on silence. But Gandhi insisted on telling and finally had his way.

I met a young Bengali who had been a Gandhi Volunteer for three years. He was one of a group of twenty students who, answering Gandhi's call to boycott the Government colleges, left their books and went out to carry Gandhi's message to the villages. The first year they met great enthusiasm, and the villagers took

care of them as they went along. The second year was harder going. By the third year, of the original twenty, only four remained. My young friend borrowed one thousand *rupees* ($335) on his family's credit to finance the group for another year. At the end of the year the group disbanded and he took a position with a Social Reform organization. Out of his salary of $17 a month, he is paying back $8.50 a month on the loan. He acted as my guide in visiting a number of places, but always refused to let me pay more than his actual expenses.

One morning I noticed that he was wearing straw sandals, and I asked what had become of his shoes. He laughed and said that he had slept the night before in a tent on the edge of the school grounds where we had been visiting, and that a coyote must have run off with his shoes. I insisted that he let me replace the shoes, but this lad, living on $8.50 a month, refused to permit it; nor would he allow me to make him a gift when I left. The following year, a friend spent the winter in India, and I introduced this young Bengali to him. They traveled together for five or six months, all over India. The young man refused to accept anything beyond his expenses and the $17 a month which he would have received from the Reform League. I suppose India is the only place left where people of this type still exist.

It is, I think, Indian simplicity which prompts some of their most delightful courtesies. Naïve as a child one minute, they show the most finished thoughtfulness the

next. I accosted a poorly dressed, intelligent looking Muslim who had just come out of an opium shop in Calcutta. Through my interpreter, I said that I was interested in the use of opium, and inquired whether I might ask him some questions. He agreed. I asked: How long he had been using opium? How much he had increased the dose? Why he began taking it? He gravely asked if I were thinking of using it and, if so, advised me to be careful because, if I began with the dose he now took, it would kill me. I explained that I only wanted to write about it. He then asked if he might accompany us, and for an hour or more he followed my interpreter, a young Hindu, and myself through the bazaars. When he finally left us he said that he would like to present me with something—Might he buy me a *mango?*

I had an experience one early morning in one of the Indian states that has left a specially pleasant memory. I was traveling alone at the time, and had no bearer. I had ordered a *tonga* at five to catch a six o'clock train, but the *tonga* man did even better, and arrived at four. A decrepit oil light burned on the station platform. I picked my way over the bodies of sleepers. From the end of the platform, I watched the lights of the big gambling tent maintained by the Maharajah, the fading stars, and the sudden breaking of dawn. As I walked up and down the gravel path, suddenly a young Indian stood beside me. Timidly he asked if I would not sit on his bench under the veranda roof. I told him that I liked it where I was.

"But, *Memsahib*," he insisted, "the dew is bad. It will make you very sick."

I had never seen this man before. He had no reason for being polite to a strange white woman traveling without even the usual servant. When he persisted, I could not refuse. He had spread a quilt on one of the few benches in a sheltered corner of the porch. It was too dark to see the quilt. The air was heavy. I sat there for a few minutes, and he asked the inevitable questions. I wanted most awfully to get away. I remembered the dawn. I thanked him for his thoughtfulness and told him I must watch an Eastern sunrise.

I did not enjoy sitting on the quilt. But I treasure the memory of this anonymous Indian. Instinctively he rose to the occasion when he saw a scatter-brained white woman catching her death under the deadly night dews. He would be capable of the same impersonal courtesy as the Western man, if it were expected of him.

INDIAN PRINCES

Rajahs and Rupees

THE first Indian Prince I saw was a handsome youngster in his late teens, dressed in correct English clothes and a pale green turban striped with gold. An Englishwoman pointed him out to me in the lobby of our Bombay hotel one morning, and said, "You probably will not see him again. His three elder brothers drank themselves to death in the last few years, and he is following them. He spends most of his time in his room, dead to the world."

The Indian Princes belong, not to British India, but to that remnant of the old régime which survives under the protection of the British *raj*. There are 700 Indian states. They cover one-third the area of India, and have a population of 70 millions, nearly one-quarter of the total. They vary in size from states as large as Texas to tiny principalities too small to show on ordinary maps. They have little in common, but run the gamut of types of government and standards of living according to the disposition and whims of their rulers.

They constitute an anomalous institution. Queen Victoria in her Proclamation of 1858, following the Mutiny, pledged the *raj* to respect the rights, dignity and honor of the Indian Princes as its own. This places the full power of the British throne behind these 700 Oriental potentates. It practically frees them of re-

sponsibility to their people, so long as they do not displease the *raj*. There is no such thing as rebellion in the Indian states. It would involve challenging the British Empire.

The Government keeps in touch with each state through a local Resident. Some say that these Residents are the real rulers, and the Princes only figureheads. Yet the diversity of types among the states suggests considerable freedom within the limitations of British polity. Ultimate control rests frankly with the *raj*. None of the Princes enjoys full sovereignty since none of them may declare war or peace, or negotiate treaties with other states or nations. Their armies are limited and most of them amount to little more than a police force. Sir George Campbell in his *History of Modern India* defines British policy toward the Indian states: "There is no uniform system, and it is impossible to give any definite explanation of what things we do meddle with and what we do not." The haughtiest *maharajah* maintains his pomp only with the acquiescence of the *raj*. The recent deposition of the Maharajah of Indore is an example of the penalty for undesirable publicity.

A few states stand out conspicuously as the most advanced. Baroda and Mysore have local self-government, and free compulsory education. The Maharajah of Mysore has introduced woman suffrage and organized aggressive departments of Agriculture and of Industry and Commerce.

A number of the young Princes are educated at Ox-

ford and Cambridge, and borrow freely from Western civilization. Some of them become enthusiastic sportsmen, famous for their *de luxe* tiger and wild elephant hunts. They are perhaps most famous for their fabulous jewels. The Nizam of Hyderabad, who owns the diamond mines of Golconda, has a collection of precious stones which has been valued as high as $500,000,000. I heard of private garages of some sixty odd French cars. Some specialize in polo ponies, others in harems. An increasing number are learning the charms of Paris and the Riviera.

It is not surprising that they should be very loyal to the British *raj*, and unanimously opposed to an extension of *swaraj*—self-government. Some of the most prominent will not permit Gandhi or any Nationalist leader to set foot in their domains. They are disturbed by the Government's policy of granting constitutional reforms.

They have organized a Chamber of Princes which meets in Delhi every winter. They recently sent a Commission to England to obtain a statement of the correct constitutional position of the Princes within the Empire. They remind the *raj* that their treaties were made with the British India of the middle nineteenth century, not with this British India evolving toward democracy.

Critics of India's aspirations toward self-government point to backward conditions in the Indian states as proof that the Indians are not fit to rule themselves. It is not a fair test. Not many millionaires' sons, even in

this country of materialism, achieve anything distinctive. There is a saying that it is only three generations from shirt-sleeves to shirt-sleeves. From his birth, the Indian Prince is the pampered victim of too much of everything. When these poor little rich boys grow up, they become rulers to whose whims 70 million people are irretrievably committed.

The result of this pampering is an amazing mortality in Indian Princes. Few of them live even to middle life. I was told that their ages average about twenty years. Most of them have several wives, but many leave no heir to the throne and adoptions are very common.

They tell a curious story about one royal family. Long ago, a curse was pronounced upon the house—for ten generations, the *maharajah* should die at the moment of the birth of his first legitimate male child. No *maharajah* dares to risk having a child by one of his wives, for it might be a boy. They marry high caste Princesses, shut them up in the harem, and console themselves with concubines. Each *maharajah* adopts an heir. The uncle of the present ruling Prince died recently at the age of eighty, possessed of seven wives and three hundred concubines. A state official told me that he left at least sixty sons by his concubines. Each of these sons draws a *jagir* (allowance) proportioned to the degree of interest the old *rajah* felt in the lad's mother. They run from $8 to $175 a month, beside settlements of estates and other property.

The Rajput Princes are supremely proud. They

trace their descent from the Sun and Moon. Only a few families of Rajput Princes are eligible to furnish brides. The schoolboy Maharajah of Jaipur was married at fourteen to a Princess of the house of Jodhpur twelve years older than he and, at the same time, betrothed to her ten-year-old sister. Ultimately, he will marry all her sisters until he has his complement of seven wives.

Approaching ever so casually the inner circles of an Indian state, I became aware of an atmosphere of intrigue and espionage. Great Britain's secret service system is famous the world over. In India it is called, with sinister emphasis, the Criminal Investigation Department. The initials C. I. D. are a talisman. How closely the C. I. D. is linked up with the secret service in the various states, one can only guess. I often stumbled over vigorous, middle-aged English men and women, nominally retired, living in the petty officialdom of some Indian state—because they love the scenery, or the climate, or what not!

A prominent Indian Nationalist told me that all his mail was opened and read before he received it. When he leaves his city home, where the authorities have facilities for handling such matters, to take a vacation in his village birthplace, the local post office and espionage system is swamped with his mail. He said he had received letters which they had steamed open, and then did not bother to reseal, but merely fastened down with a wire clip.

For the first five years of a foreigner's residence in a

well-known Indian state, most of his mail, both incoming and outgoing, is opened and read. A spy is planted in the household of every family of importance, both foreign and Indian, preferably a dining-room boy, because talk is likely to be free across the dinner-table. When, as sometimes happens, there are two or more factions, each maintaining an underground spy system, every smallest action and opinion is taken up and repeated and distorted, and these minor court circles become whispering galleries equipped with loud speakers.

I heard rumors of weird extravagances of vice. Some of the jeweled and perfumed *rajahs*, with languid eyes and deeply lined faces, suggest a theatrical degeneracy, like the characters of Sin and Lust in a Morality Play.

Two Indian Princes have achieved world-wide notoriety in recent years. Both affairs reached their dénouement while I was in India. The scandalous publicity which followed had touches of Oriental ruthlessness, grim details cropping up incidentally which piqued the imagination. Coming just as I entered India, they formed a sinister background to the glitter and pomp which was all that I saw of Oriental court life.

A dancing girl was for several years a favorite of the Maharajah of Q. She escaped from him to live in Bombay as the mistress of a wealthy Parsi merchant. Minor court officials, one day, held up the motor in which she and her patron were driving through a park. This park is a thoroughfare, as it lies between the smart British residential section, Malabar Hill, and the city of Bombay.

Three young British officers, who had arrived in India on the same ship as I did, were motoring back to their hotel from tea on Malabar Hill. They happened to take a wrong turn which led them off the main boulevard. They heard cries, and saw a car surrounded by Indians. Before they could reach it, the girl's face had been hideously gashed, and her companion was dead. The Englishmen summoned the police, and the thugs were identified as officials from the state of Q.

In the investigation which followed, the dancer told of fabulous gifts of jewels and finery from the Maharajah, of the intrigue and wire-pulling within the court, of her baby, born in the palace, and strangled at birth by a palace midwife, standing at the foot of her bed, who said that it was by the Maharajah's orders.

The Maharajah denied complicity in the attack on the girl. The Government ordered that he be tried. Rather than submit, he abdicated in favor of an adopted heir. Since then, he has again captured the spotlight by taking an American girl as his third wife.

Three young officers making a wrong turn on Malabar Hill started a chain of circumstances which ousted a *maharajah* from his throne. The fact that these retainers recklessly pursued their vendetta into the most exclusive preserves of British India impressed me. It suggests that such affairs may be arranged very quietly and effectively in remote states where there is no press and no foreign colony.

Indians who criticize the Princes as being pampered cat's-paws for the British *raj* cite the case of the notori-

ous 'Mr. A.,' the pseudonym by which, when he got into a scrape, a benevolent government attempted to conceal the identity of its candidate for heir to the throne of an important Indian state.

The late Maharajah, who has recently died, was an old-fashioned orthodox Hindu. He ate his meals in private, his feet touching the ground. He would not even swallow water in public. He made pilgrimages to holy cities. He consulted astrologers for auspicious dates. As he had no son, the British Government had recognized a nephew, Sir X, as heir to the throne. Educated in England, Sir X showed an early disregard of orthodox Hinduism. The Maharajah remonstrated in vain. In protest, he adopted a son of his own orthodox type as his 'spiritual heir,' hoping to influence the *raj* to accept him.

Sir X, the nephew, grew up a wild young blade, well-known in the night life of Paris. He took as aide-de-camp a British Colonel with a dubious reputation. The India office across the Channel watched Sir X anxiously. They warned him several times that he was in dangerous hands. But Sir X would not listen. The adventurers worked the hackneyed old 'badger game.' Sir X took an English woman to his hotel room in Paris. Her 'husband' surprised them, and made such an effective scene that Sir X paid the gang a million and a half dollars. The thieves fell out over their golden egg, and indiscreetly took each other to court.

Having failed to avert the catastrophe, the Government tried to conceal its protégé's name. In the

majesty of wig and robes, the Judge ordered that the mysterious Eastern Prince involved in the case be designated as 'Mr. A.' This disguise lasted about twenty-four hours. American newspaper men in Paris at once identified 'Mr. A.' as Sir X, and cabled his name to the States. It was relayed back to the British press and, ultimately, even the British papers in India carried the story.

Sir X paid no more blackmail, but he was damaged goods. The irate 'husband's' epithets of 'damned nigger,' the lady's contempt for the 'easy mark,' were blazed in headlines across the seven seas. Ribald laughter pursued 'Mr. A.' around the world. He became a comic character. It is scarcely possible for us of the West to imagine the humiliation which the proud old Maharajah suffered. It is forbidden to the orthodox Hindu to cross the ocean, to have intimate relations with foreign women, to drink intoxicants, to eat meat; these were only a few of Sir X's transgressions.

The Maharajah made renewed efforts to induce the *raj* to recognize his beloved adopted son as his successor instead of the notorious Sir X. But his efforts were futile. Critics of Government cynically point out that it is desirable to have as ruler of this important buffer state a young man whose interests lie in Paris. It leaves the Resident with a freer hand.

While the scandal was at its height, the old Maharajah made a pilgrimage to the most sacred spot in India, the holy city of Benares. I happened to be there at the time. In the brisk chill of a January sunrise, I noticed

a commotion near the *ghats* (steps) lining the sacred Ganges. A whisper buzzed through the bazaar, "The Maharajah of X is coming down to bathe, his special train arrived this morning."

Stripped of pomp, the Maharajah approached the sacred river as a humble pilgrim, walking barefoot through the chilly dawn. He was an old and feeble man, with not long to live, leaning heavily on the arms of two attendants. He wore white *dhotis*, a loose white tunic coat, and a high turban of dazzling whiteness. He was followed by a score of men in loose coats and turbans of nondescript materials and colors. It was a surprisingly casual procession in this land of pageantry. Yet there was something epic about this old man's pilgrimage to expiate the sins of the heir to his throne. The Maharajah, his face lined with grief, eyes on the ground, led the way with the austere dignity of an Old Testament patriarch. It was like meeting Abraham some early morning on his way to offer sacrifices to his God.

Gwalior à l'Anglais

It was Saturday afternoon and Race Day. A brass band played last year's dance tunes. Cockney bookies dropped their h's pleadingly. Georgette dresses and gay parasols fluttered about the paddocks. A visiting British Princess with yellow hair, pink cheeks, china-blue eyes and huge pearls sat in the royal box, an uniformed aide-de-camp bending over her.

In spite of its being so familiar, it was curiously disturbing. It was like a 'what is wrong with this picture' advertisement. For this was not England, nor even British India. This was my first day in the Indian states. I had, perhaps, been anticipating an India of childhood fantasies, an old Persian painting come to life. There had been no British in my picture: just a riot of color, flower-beds of gay turbans and blowing draperies; *nawabs* and *rajahs*, blazing with jewels, lolling in gilded *palanquins; houris*, peacock fans, eunuchs; and the fragrance of sandalwood and jasmine. Instead, I was whisked out of the train, and set down in the center of this *pukka* (regular) British race course.

An Imperial crimson carpet flashed across the Clubhouse entrance. All the important people of Gwalior promenaded past. The numerous British advisers, political and commercial, to H. H. the Maharajah of

Gwalior, their wives, and British officials from neighboring states, made up fully half the crowd of several hundred.

Most of the Indians wore European dress, following the example of their ruler. Their turbans contrasted quaintly with sedate sack suits of linen and tweed. I was grateful to the few Indians who kept to their own dress, long-skirted, tight coats of brocaded satin; heavy silks draped like a toga; sheer white mulls and lawns.

This was my first gathering of upper-class Indians. The crowds at the National Congress were the rank and file. Here I recognized a certain modeling of brow and nostril. The turbans too were as distinctive as a man's collar and necktie. The mass of turbans in the street are dirty white, or dingy red and blue. The coolie pulls off his turban to blot up the streaming perspiration. Then, holding the rag to his head with one hand, with the other he twists it round and round, any old way, and tucks the end under.

A gentleman's turban is very different. The material is delicate sheer stuff, with just enough dressing to give it body. Each fold is laid in exactly symmetrical lines. There is something exquisite about a prince's turban. One thinks of Beau Brummell. The turbans at the race course were pale lavender, Nile green, the pink of lotus flowers, the gold of the *babul* tree. Maratha caps are of bright pinks and yellows, a snug turban, with a brim turned up at one side, like a woman's toque of the '90's. Some distinguished-looking *seths* (bankers) wore close-fitting turbans of crimson gauze, tight across the back,

and sloping up to a truncated peak in front. These are familiar from old portraits of Indian princes.

The men were like characters in a pantomime. I could not imagine them going home to play with the baby, or read the newspapers in the equivalent of shirt sleeves. They talked in low tones, smiled with restraint, bowed and *salaamed* with courtly dignity. There was nothing of the American race track here, no back-slapping and boisterous laughter. Even the English jockeys were different, pale tired-looking lads in brilliant red and green and yellow satins, and breeches of thin white China silk. Broad satin pads like chest protectors hung from the back of their jockey caps to protect their bare necks as they leaned over their horses in the blazing sunlight. The cockney bookies called their odds in nicely modulated tones. When the jockeys rounded the home stretch, there was just the slightest leaning forward, and a polite murmur of well-bred interest.

There was not an Indian woman in sight. A curtain across the top tiers of the grandstand concealed the *purdah* section. Only the more liberal officials would permit their women to attend, heavily veiled. They drive up to the *purdah* entrance in a curtained carriage or automobile. Clutching their veils, they slip up the stairs, chattering over the adventure of being permitted to peer out through holes and slits in the curtain at the gay crowd below. Neither of the two Maharanis was present, because, it was said, the Maharajah was displeased and was punishing them.

Races were run every half hour. Between races, we strolled about the paddocks, commenting on horses and jockeys. I was with a young Indian official. He wore a pongee suit, and pale pink turban, and drove a smart little *tumtum*, or dog cart. Numerous Englishmen bowed to us. But if we stopped near a group leaning over the paddock fence, they melted away like snow. While we were drinking lemonade, the Maharajah summoned my escort, and wanted to know who the strange *Memsahib* might be. He accompanied the official back to our table, and was very friendly and informal. The Maharajah was a dark man of medium stature, dressed in a sack suit of a brown mixture that had the Bond Street look, and a soft brown felt hat. He was about forty-five, and looked the man of the world and wealthy 'sport,' his mannerisms and atmosphere being much more European than Indian. He gave a sense of abundant vitality that afternoon, and there was nothing to hint of approaching tragedy. But he died only three months later in Paris, following an operation.

It was his predilection for all things English which determined the dress and atmosphere of his court just as, in Udaipur, where the handsome old Maharajah parts his beard down the middle of his chin and brushes it out under his ears, all the nobility brush their beards out under their ears, and look so romantic that I wanted to clap my hands and throw them flowers.

The Maharajah of Gwalior inherits his admiration of the British from his father, who was one of the few

Princes in northern India who remained loyal to the *raj* during the Mutiny. His state, lying as it does midway between Delhi and Lucknow, gave the Maharajah Jaiji Rao a strategic position. When his sepoys mutinied, killing their British officers, and implored him to lead them against the British, he punished them with a firm hand. When his landed families and the neighboring Princes condemned him as a traitor to themselves and his people, he never faltered. In consequence, the Maharajah has been conspicuously honored with grants and decorations.

Although the royal house of Scindia is one of the richest in India, it is also one of the youngest. Ranoji Sindhia who died about 1750 was its founder. The tradition is that he was a *sudra*, a low caste, whose humble duty it was to carry the slippers of his ruler. One day the *Peshwa*, leaving a long conference, found Ranoji lying asleep with the royal slippers firmly clasped to his breast. The *Peshwa* was pleased and promoted the slipper bearer. He later won distinction as a daring military leader, and ultimately made a bargain with the *raj* by which, in return for military support, they recognized him as a ruler.

The Maharajah whom I met at the race course was rated as one of the three richest Princes in India, and was very popular with the British. But in the eyes of aristocratic old Rajput Princes, his *sudra* ancestor can never be overlooked. They would not consider marrying their children to his.

The Gwalior palace grounds were very beautiful.

The marble palace was of Oriental magnificence. Near by stood the Guest House, a fantastic three-story building of turrets and bays. The guest's register read like a roster of the British peerage, and attested the Maharajah's hospitality.

I was taken to call on the two Ranis. The way to the *zenana* led through passages and up staircases. Soldiers walked post in the graveled drives. Serving women crouched, dull red blurs in the corners of the stairs. In the last anteroom sat four flower-like ladies-in-waiting. The Senior Rani was seated on a gilt settee in a long, stiff drawing-room of Victorian velvets and satin damask. A woman stood fanning her. This was the Maharajah's first wife, married at eleven. When, after ten years, she had borne him no children, he took a second wife by whom he had a daughter and a son.

I remember hearing a Mormon woman in Utah tell of how the first wife suffered when her husband took other wives. Many of these Mormon women were Scandinavian girls who allowed themselves to be brought to this country knowing that polygamy was part of their new faith. But when it came to the point it meant agony. From what I saw of *zenana* life, I judge that, in spite of the traditions of centuries, Indian women find it just as hard. The only women I have known who attempted not to be jealous were feminists. They did not seem very successful.

Perhaps fifteen years ago, Robert Chauvelot, writing his *Mysterious India*, said that the Maharajah of Gwalior had renounced polygamy, and that, on the

death of his mother, the Dowager, he had determined that "his only wife, the present Maharani, with whom he is very much in love, should give up her veil, and show her face uncovered."

The Maharajah anglicized so many phases of his personal and court life that it would have been natural to grant the women of his *zenana* greater freedom. Evidently the French writer was given to understand that he planned to do so. It would be interesting to know what considerations tipped the scale to the opposite extreme.

The day I saw her, the Maharani wore no jewels, and was dressed in a black *sari*. Black is not mourning in India, but the people do not like black, and rarely wear it. Except for Bengali women, who wear black when traveling, this was the only black *sari* I saw. Owing to the displeasure of the Maharajah, neither she nor the Junior Maharani had been permitted to see the British Princess who had just visited their Court for a week. There had been tiger hunts, balls, state banquets. But the Princess had left without calling on the two wives in their *zenana*.

Sitting in the Maharani's drawing-room, I thought of the power some of her predecessors had wielded. Prisoners within these guarded walls, their windows opening only on inner courtyards, women of the house of Scindia have transformed Ministers and Courts into puppets to do their bidding. In the last century, the names of Baiza Bai and Tara Bai, both of them Regents, were names to conjure with.

There was no hint of imminent change that afternoon. The Maharani in her black *sari* seemed subdued and depressed. Three months later, this quiet woman with the sad eyes stepped from the prison-like isolation of her *zenana* to the throne of Gwalior. She will rule Gwalior as Regent for the next decade until the eight-year-old heir—son of the second wife—comes of age. It is an Oriental version of the Cinderella story.

One of the Maharani's first acts was to close the race tracks, and curtail the gambling which had been organized on an elaborate scale. During our talk that afternoon, while she was still a prisoner, the conversation was perfunctory. She was distrait. I told her the palace grounds were beautiful, the town quaint and charming. But I was conscious of a surcharged atmosphere. I wished there were some 'open sesame' by which I could throw back the walls of reserve and convention which locked us in, and induce this quiet woman with the melancholy eyes to talk about her life, her interests, her real thoughts. I longed to ask her childishly naïve questions about those Regent Queens of the past, and how it had been possible for them to attain their power.

As we passed out through the anteroom, the pretty ladies in *saris* shimmering with gold were playing with a tiny girl. She was dressed in pale-yellow satin brocade, reaching stiffly to the floor. With her winsome baby face and plump little hands, she looked like a Velásquez Infanta.

Waiting in the corridor to be conducted to the Junior

Rani's apartments, I noticed a heavily curtained window. This is the only window in the *zenana* which overlooks the main palace building. Sometimes through this window *zenana* inmates may see courtiers promenading, or state guests crossing from the drawing-rooms to the banquet hall.

The window was elaborately curtained; first the glass window, then a thick bead curtain, behind that a closely woven curtain of bamboo, last a curtain of green silk. The silk curtain had been slit up the center to the height of a woman's eyes, and was stained and frayed with fingering. Some of the two-inch bits of bamboo had been broken away. The bead curtain was intact. These little chinks afforded two Queens their only view of the life of the palace below. Standing there in the twilight, looking down into the empty marble courtyard through this haze of draggled, fingered layers of *purdah* was one of my most poignant moments in India.

I remembered the two great Queens, Baiza Bai and Tara Bai, whose indomitable spirit had triumphed over marble walls, and the even more substantial barrier of tradition. I thought of how recklessly wasteful the world has been of the energy of its women, forcing them to work through such devious, backhanded means. Will their greater freedom release them for prodigies of achievement or, relieved of the stimulus of oppression, will they sink back to the conventional achievements of men?

The Junior Rani was also seated on a gold and damask settee at the end of a long stiff drawing-room,

on the other side of the *zenana* wing. She rose to meet me and was very gracious. Putting an arm around each of her children, she drew them down beside her on the sofa. The eight-year-old Prince was dressed in yellow satin trousers and a coat of crimson and gold brocade. The little Princess, eleven years old, was dressed like a boy in blue satin trousers fitted tightly below the knees, a knee-length fitted coat of bright pink satin, and a cap of heavy gold embroidery. She was to enter *purdah* shortly. For these last months, she was having her fling, riding with her father to tiger and elephant hunts, taking long walks, leading an almost tomboy life.

They were gay enthusiastic youngsters, with all the eager interest and curiosity of childhood. Both spoke excellent English, and joined in the conversation naturally and without self-consciousness. They were admirable testimonials to *zenana* child culture. The animation of the young Princess was a contrast to the melancholy inertia of the two Ranis. It was dreadful to imagine her surrendering the freedom of her gay satin trousers and outdoor life and, swathed in the suffocating folds of the *purdah*, settling down in some royal *zenana* to watch a tiny segment of life through the chinks in a bamboo screen.

There was a curious mixture of East and West in my next glimpse of *zenana* life. The Maharajah has presented an elaborate summer house to the ladies of Gwalior as a Ladies' Club House. All the leading women of the station, European and Indian, belong to it, about one hundred altogether. It is a social and

sport club, and is modeled after English women's clubs.

The Maharajah furnished it to the last detail—golf sticks, tea cups, magazines, pin cushions. The oval drawing-room is theatrically effective, with French windows opening on an artificial lake that might have been a painting by Urban. The walls are done in startling blue and black stripes. Carved furniture from Kashmir gives an ornate touch. Numerous small rooms upstairs may be used for card-, tea-, dressing-rooms. On the frescoed walls, parrots and macaws peer from flowering thickets, elephants and tiger stalk through dense jungles. A quaintly naïve painting of the narrow-gauge railroad laid by His Highness to his palace door fills a conspicuous wall, the toy engine and train of cars steaming through emerald-green jungle and rioting rose bushes.

This symbol of feminine freedom catering to the busy modern woman seemed a shade ironic in a land where women are subject to capricious and often tyrannical masters. I wondered how often *zenana* women changed their *saris* in these dressing-rooms! As a romantic gesture the club house is delightful, and it must be pleasant for the wives of British officials.

While I was in Gwalior, the Senior Rani kindly provided a royal elephant to carry me up the steep climb to the famous old Fort, which towers 300 feet above the plain like a rock of Gibraltar. The plateau at the top measures perhaps half a mile by two miles. The royal elephant, which carried the Prince of Wales during his recent visit, was saddled with a *howdah* of solid

gold. Members of the suite rode in trappings of silver. For ordinary visitors like myself, they provide baser metals, steel as I remember.

The elephant knelt and I climbed a wooden ladder into the *howdah*. A series of earthquake tremors, and we were off. A *mahout* (driver) riding on the elephant's neck kept a pointed steel spike pressed against its head. Two attendants followed, carrying wooden staffs ten feet long, tipped with steel points. Elephants in India seem to have more will-to-live than our circus animals, and now and then, they run amok. The Rajah's elephant at Suri had a sudden attack of temper while I was there. Without warning, he reached round with his trunk, plucked the *mahout* from his neck, and crushed him against a fence.

As we climbed the mountain, we passed shrines and balconies cut into the living rock, where generations of courtiers have rested from the steep climb. On the other side, the mountain fell away sharply to the plains far below, and the ruins of ancient Gwalior, five thousand years old, which were framed, this March twilight, in a haze of blue smoke from fires kindled for supper in the mud huts. There rose to us that exotic, acrid fragrance of dried cow dung burning, which has blown against these rocky walls, like incense round an altar, through the dawns and twilights of many thousand years. Looking out over the plain, I was haunted by the infinite succession of sunsets and dawns and intrigues that are fused into the passing of five thousand years. I had a sudden suffocating recognition of

the incredible unimportance of that one March twilight.

The castle crowning the rock rose sheer above us, with battlemented towers and lovely flashes of sapphire blue and yellow tiles which are to-day a lost art. We passed through six successive gates, each one more elaborately carved than the last. Inside the last, an incredible frieze of yellow ducklings against a background of brilliant blue tiles runs round the frowning castle as though it were a child's nursery.

At one end of this Gibraltar rock are famous sculptures of heroic size, carved by the Jains 1,500 years ago. Half a hundred seated Buddhas and standing figures have been carved into the precipitous face of the cliff. The tallest one is fifty-seven feet high. His Highness had a finely graded masonry road built curving up the cliff, so that he might motor his guests to the Fort instead of their plodding up on an elephant's back. The road was an excellent piece of engineering, but it rose ruthlessly waist high in front of the Buddhas, and it seemed a pity.

The only modern life that has invaded the old plateau is a private school for sons of the nobility, and a village of school servants. We passed a Muslim cemetery. Men in turbans were beating drums and singing Debussy dissonances about a newly made grave covered with a bright yellow cloth. A group of *pundits* (teachers) strolled through the dusk. Three of them, wearing garlands of jasmine and marigold, were saying farewell.

I looked down from the high vantage point of my elephant's back. The flowing shawls and high turbans of the *pundits* were grouped in an enchanting pattern among the tree trunks. Strange, brilliant birds chattered in the green branches. The delicate contours of an age-old Jain temple showed against the horizon, carved inside and out with the minute detail of a jewel box. The Tank of the Sun lay deserted, cracked and uneven steps framing an expanse of beautiful, poisonous green scum. Over all hung the haunting redolence of an old culture, beautiful in its decadence.

I imagined the thrilling, colorful life that once peopled these woods with hurrying courtiers, plots and counterplots. Waves of continuous warfare surged across the plains below to gather and break against the rocky base of the fortress. Now and again, the waves washed over the rock, and it was passed from one party to another in the give-and-take of treaties and *sunnuds*. To-day, its Gibraltar-like impregnability is worth nothing. Bombing aeroplanes could, in the twinkling of an eye, annihilate these old Jain temples that have survived civilization's long slow climb out of barbarism.

Modern engineering builds a smooth concrete road into the Fortress whose preëminence lay for thousands of years in its inaccessibility. In the process, it blots out heroic Buddhas, worshiped for fifteen centuries as sacred and magical. The process is an inevitable evolution. It is sentimental to mourn over the details.

Twilight faded rapidly as the elephant plodded down

the mountainside. The blue smoke of the fires was blotted out. The bright red brick grandstand and race course, and the dazzling whiteness of the Maharajah's marble palace merged into a monotone of gray dusk. From the gateway came the muffled beat of drums, and the minor tones of strings. It was the sunset music which, through the centuries, has been played only above the palace gateway of a reigning Indian Prince.

It was almost dark when I reached my waiting *tonga.* The elephants and their *mahouts salaamed.* I drove away through the incense smoke of open fires, and the twinkling candlelight of mud huts, all that remains of old Gwalior, into the mysterious darkness which, night after night, for thousands of years has blotted out scenes of warfare and victory and defeat beneath those grim walls.

Udaipur à l'Indien

THE last three miles to Udaipur I rode in a springless *tonga* over bumpy roads, up and down hill. The Maharana does not like the railroad. Until 1900 he would not permit it to come within eight miles of his capital city. Even to-day, the one-track road reaching seventy miles across his state stops respectfully three miles away.

If it happens to be there, and you prefer, you may ride those three miles in a sad-looking 'jitney.' I grieve to admit that there is a 'flivver' in Udaipur. Otherwise, it is perfect, a Never-Never land, where Romance lurks at every turn. The handsome, proud old ruler of Udaipur has kept it so. An aristocrat of the old school, he instinctively dislikes the new and clings to the old. And this is fitting, for his house is the most ancient existing dynasty in all the world.

India's Rajput Princes are the flower of her aristocracy. The pages of their history contain as gallant stories as are to be found in the annals of chivalry. Of all the Rajput families, the house of Udaipur is oldest and proudest. Their origin is lost in antiquity. They trace their ancestry back through the great god Ram to the Sun, and their insignia is a sun with golden rays against a disc of black ostrich feathers, a symbol to

which every Hindu from whatever part of India does homage.

The earliest historically accepted records of the family go back to the seventh century. The reigning *rajah* was murdered. His wife, who was pregnant, escaped. When a son was born, she entrusted him to a Brahman woman, and then mounted the funeral pyre to join her dead Lord. The boy was a leader among his Bhil companions. One day in the forest, after some daring adventure, they agreed to elect him their King. One of the Bhils cut his finger and, with the blood, made the royal mark on Bappu Rawul's forehead. The stately, white bearded Rana of Udaipur is descended from this Rajah Bappu Rawul. Through sixty-four generations his family have controlled these purple hills and valleys. To this day, when a Rana of Udaipur ascends the *gadi* (throne), his forehead is marked with the blood of a Bhil subject. Udaipur stands to-day, much as it has for centuries, a state of 13,000 square miles, and a million and a half subjects.

Udaipur, the capital, is a gray-walled city, built on a hill that rises sheer from the shores of a clear blue lake. Hill and lake are encircled in a frame of purple-blue, volcanic hills. Many of these cones are topped with a shining white temple, the spreading gray masonry of a fortress, or the irregular terraces and cupolas of a palace. When His Highness spends a week-end at a hill-top palace, men and women stationed every half mile to the summit continuously pass up jars

of water for the royal household. To the palace guests, the labor of those thousands of hands undoubtedly gives the water a flavor that would be lost by digging ditches and running the water through pipes.

The palace of Udaipur, a vast pile of white marble, crowns the top of a hill, the city clinging to the lower slopes. The upper turrets give an enchanting view over palace roofs of crooked hilly streets, flights of worn stone steps, shrines and courts and terraces. The mirror surface of Lake Pichola, blue-green and clear, sparkles in the sun. Clean water is so rare in India that the sight of this crystal mountain lake is a delightful surprise.

Far out across the water at Udaipur, a tiny obelisk of white marble shines like a jewel set upon the bosom of the lake. The tradition is that several generations ago, a young Maharana was infatuated with a dancing girl, and promised her half his kingdom if she could walk a tight rope across the lake. The girl was half way across when the prime minister, beating his breast in horror, rushed down to the water's edge and cut the rope. The Maharana, deeply grieved, had the prime minister executed and built this slender white memorial over the spot where his beloved disappeared.

I noticed a curious contrivance over the royal kitchens, an iron hoop, crossed by an iron X which leaned at an angle between two uprights. It was an astronomical instrument, presented to a Maharana in the early eighteenth century by Jai Singh II, the famous mathematician-astronomer-ruler of Jaipur. It was an infal-

lible charm against the use of poison in the royal kitchen. My guide added that, as it was not working just now, the Maharana had a Taster who tasted all food before it was served to him. I asked what was the matter with the instrument, and the guide answered in a matter-of-fact way that he did not understand about such things, so could not explain.

Half an hour later, in the palace courtyard, we met the Taster himself, followed by two coolies. From a bamboo pole across their shoulders hung a package the size of a bushel basket, wrapped in canvas, and fastened with ropes and seals. This was the Court's next meal. The Taster saw it packed in the kitchen, accompanied it to the wing of the palace which His Highness might be occupying, saw it unpacked and, at the last moment, tasted it. Tasting evidently agreed with him. He was a plump, jolly-looking person, dressed in the height of Rajput fashion.

A few years ago being a Taster in India was no sinecure. In the sixteenth century, a plot to poison the Emperor Babar almost succeeded. The deed was traced to the imperial kitchens. Babar wrote: "The Taster was ordered to be cut to pieces. I commanded the cook to be flayed alive. One of the women was ordered to be trampled to death by an elephant; the other I commanded to be shot with a matchlock."

Gallant as are the tales of Rajput chivalry, stories of the women's dauntless courage are even more thrilling. During the centuries, the Fortress of Chitore has been sacked three times. Each time, after a brave defense

against hopeless odds, surrender became inevitable. Each time within the Fortress the women of Udaipur built great funeral pyres. Arrayed in bridal robes, and led by the Rani, they threw themselves into the flames in their thousands rather than submit to conquerors.

Colonel Tod tells a dramatic story of the beautiful Kishna Komari Bai, 'the Flower of Rajasthan.' Her fifteen years had passed hidden in the prison-like *zenana* of this very palace, but the fame of her beauty had spread through Rajputana. There was a desperate struggle for her hand between the Rajahs of Jodhpur and Jaipur, which threatened to plunge all Rajputana into warfare. In order to save the land, the Rana of Udaipur agreed to sacrifice his daughter, and ordered that she be poisoned. Aware of her own bewitching beauty, with life all before her, this descendant of Rajput Princesses drank her fatal cup with the stoic calm of Socrates accepting the hemlock at the end of a long life.

The records of this distinguished family of Udaipur illustrate the high mortality of Indian princes, and the frequent necessity of adopting an heir to the throne. The father of the beautiful Kishna Komari had, according to Colonel Tod, ninety-five children, sons and daughters. When he died, only one son remained to succeed him, Jowan Singh. This Prince, though he had four young princesses as wives, died without issue, and was succeeded in 1838 by an adopted son. In the century since Jowan Singh, the throne has never passed

to a son, but successively to an adopted son, a brother, a nephew, a cousin, and another cousin, the present Rana, Sir Fateh Singhji.

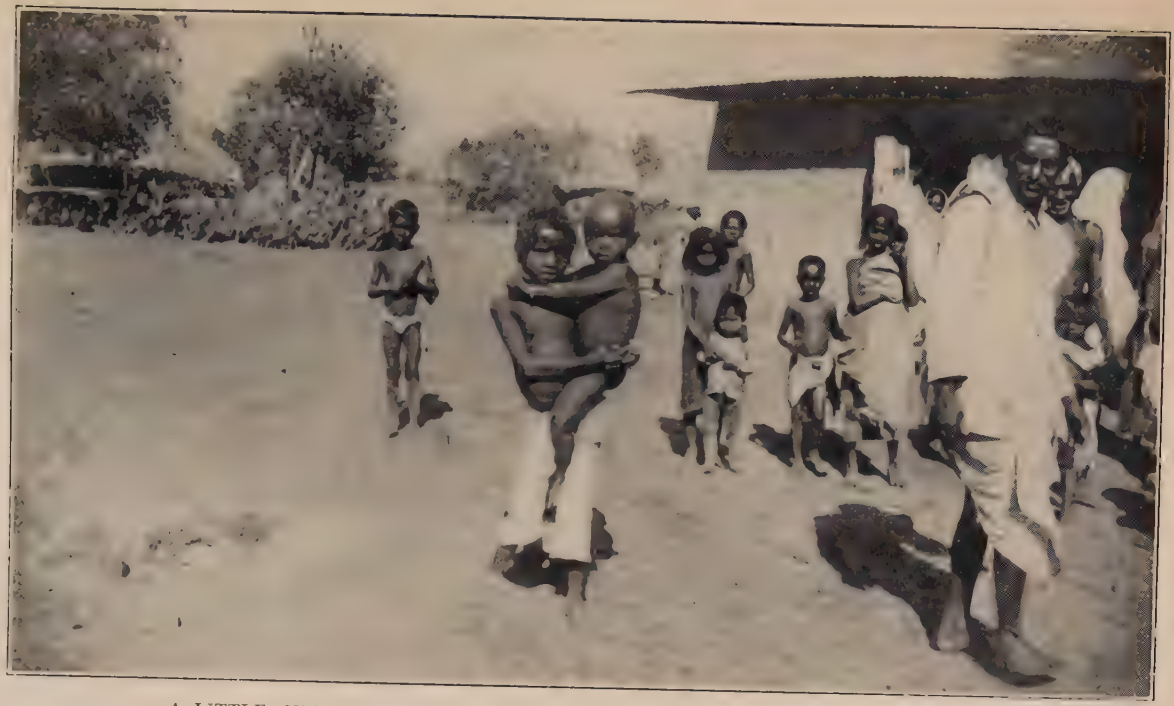
Quite by chance, I arrived in Udaipur for one of its chief festivals. A court official, met on the train in the morning, invited me to the palace that afternoon to see the Maharana and his Court pass in full *durbar*. The *tonga* I had ordered for four o'clock turned out to be the disintegrating 'flivver.' This was a blow, but there was no time to insist on having my own way. It would have meant at least a three hours' wait to get a *tonga*. Rebelliously I climbed into the anachronistic automobile. We drove past the Royal Gardens where monkeys and parrots chattered, peacocks strutted and cool white fountains played. Then through a settlement of mud huts, over an exotic stucco bridge, arching high in the center like a camel's back.

Across a moat and drawbridge towered the bastioned city walls. There were slits for cannon and musketry, and high turrets at the angles of the walls. The ponderous wooden gates, bristling with huge spikes to repel charging elephants, made anything less than elephants seem antlike, and my gasping motor an impertinence. These weather-beaten gray walls were built to keep out the fierce Rajput *thakurs* of the surrounding hills. To this day, a gun is fired at nine o'clock each evening, and the gates clang to against the outside world. No one may pass in or out until five next morning.

The drawbridge was for me a magic carpet. I stepped across it into a Land of Dreams. The huts of gray-white stucco made quaint angles as they followed the zigzag road, clinging to the steep hillside, up and up to the towering white marble walls of the palace. Handsome Rajput noblemen rode by on elephants, camels, Arab steeds. Above the shouts of carters goading their bullocks, and the cries of children, rose the clanking of golden anklets as the women of the people padded by, barefooted, full skirts of flowered print rippling and swaying like a dancer's. The streets were redolent of spices, the fragrance of flowers and the mustiness of ancient places. There was the beat of tom-toms in the distance.

Every angle in the gray walls, the steep banks of steps leading up to temples, flat red roofs, broad white-washed platforms around wells, every balcony and pinnacle and turret of the town was a pulsating mass of people, dressed in their gayest best. Bright *saris* and turbans flashed in the sun like a Gargantuan mosaic. The populace had been sitting so for hours, with the timeless patience of the East, to see their Maharana and his Court pass. As I stopped to snap some pictures, they smiled at me with the friendliness of a holiday crowd, and gathered round the car as impressed and pleased as though it had been a Rolls-Royce.

The road fell sharply down a hill. At the foot of the hill a wing of the palace spanned the roadway with broad arches like a porte-cochère. Through the archway the lake flashed and glittered. With all eyes



A LITTLE GIRL CARRYING HER BIG BROTHER IN CUSTOMARY INDIAN FASHION

RICHLY JEWELED BRIDE PHOTOGRAPHED WITH THE GROOM BEFORE HER WEALTHY FATHER-IN-LAW'S HOME

watching us, the Ford and I wabbled down the steep yellow road, and drew up in the palace courtyard. I was bowed along through many anterooms to the bay window spanning the roadway down which I had just come. In the center sat H. H., the Crown Prince, with the British Resident and his wife. Perhaps twenty English men and women were grouped in the other windows. I slipped into an empty chair.

The tops of the white stucco houses slanting up the hillside were outlined in a vivid frieze of women's figures, rose and yellow, peacock-blues and greens, encrusted with gold and glittering in the sun. Their *saris* were drawn close, for these were high-caste women, and even on the roof tops, they kept their faces veiled.

Small boys clung to every turret and niche. Men filled doors and windows and balconies. A multitude of common people, masses of terra cotta and vermilion, streaked with the white of turbans, packed the streets. The blue lines of soldiers curved into the yellow ribbon of roadway, under the pressure of the crowd.

Through this swaying flower-bed of color, elephants stepped ponderously down the hill. Trappings of gold and crimson flashed in the sun. At the foot of the hill, immediately below us, the elephants knelt. The flower of the Rajput nobility and their sons jumped nimbly from the *howdahs* on the elephants' backs.

The noblemen's costumes were theatrically effective: baggy white trousers, fitted close about the lower leg and knee; sheer white organdy tunics; sashes and turbans of gold and silver brocades; curved daggers and

short swords encrusted with gems; strings and strings of incredible, blazing jewels around their necks, their waists, wrists, ankles, and turbans. Beards, parted in the center of the chin and brushed out straight under the ears, gave a final touch of enchantment.

Smiling and chatting, magnificently oblivious of the thousands of eyes upon them, they strolled under the arches of the palace, and grouped themselves on the marble steps edging the lake. Groups of veiled women came down the hill, one in the center bearing on her head a doll four feet high, glittering like themselves in tinseled mulls and strings of beads. The doll represented Gauri, wife of Shiva. Gauri is the goddess of unmarried maidens. Observance of this feast brings happiness and a desirable husband. Each year women of the washwoman caste dress these dolls and, while the Maharana and his escort parade in full *durbar*, they bring their goddess to the temple on the edge of the lake. In the evening, they dip roses in the lake and brush them across the goddess' lips. Circling round the goddess, they dance and sing and perform *puja* (to offer prayers or gifts to the gods). At last, they carry her back up the hill to their homes, and finish the festival with a night of revelry.

The heir to the throne of Udaipur was a man of thirty-five or forty. He wore a coat of silver brocade, shot through with pink and gray, and white skirts of sheerest mulmul. Mulmul is one of those fantastically fine fabrics for which India was famous all over the world only a few centuries ago until factory looms

strangled the old handicraft. The weaving of mulmul is now almost a lost art.

The Prince's turban was of pale green and white striped mulmul. A circle of pearls with an enormous ruby pendant fastened the turban at one side. Around his neck were two amazing ropes of pearls, such as most of us never see, except in ironically adequate imitation. The amazing thing about these pearls was not their appearance, but the psychological effect of knowing that they were real.

Behind the Prince stood four courtiers, tall handsome men in delicately shaded brocades, and ropes of jewels. The Prince has a strong, intellectual face, and the haunted eyes of an invalid. An attack of infantile paralysis at the age of sixteen left him paralyzed from the waist down. The Prince is married, but has no children. Like so many Princes, he will adopt a successor. The failure of this line is especially tragic because the present Rana, father of the Prince, leads an exemplary life. He is to-day a vigorous, sturdy man of seventy-five, looking ten years younger. He rides out to hunt boar and wild elephant, and lives the rugged life of a feudal, sportsman King. Perhaps biology has something to do with it, and this ancient family is paying the penalty of centuries of privilege and inbreeding.

Sitting in the palace windows, overlooking the *durbar*, the English men and women chatted; tennis at the Residency, what he said, what she said, what they really meant. They paid considerably less attention

to the spectacle flowing down the hill before them than an average box-party at the opera.

There was a pause. "What is all this about, does any one know?" asked a tall, commanding woman with a lorgnette. No one knew. The court official had explained it to me on the train that morning. I smiled as I imagined their consternation if I volunteered to tell them, without having been introduced!

An Englishman offered to bring over an Indian. "Yes, do, it might be entertaining." He returned with one of the noblemen standing behind the Prince, a tall, handsome man, smooth-shaven, dressed in white, with a golden sash and yellow turban. He explained the legends at some length, in what seemed to me very fair English. When he ended, the large person turned to him: "I couldn't understand what you said, but it must be very entertaining, I'm suah." The young nobleman bowed imperturbably and withdrew.

For half an hour elephants lumbered down the hill. Then came the Horse parade of the Maharana's splendid Arab horses, and his throne chair of crimson velvet, borne on the shoulders of four men. His Highness' own elephant followed, covered with cloth of gold, a network of gold mesh over head and shoulders, rosettes of gold like inverted bowls down its back, golden anklets clanking about its tree-trunk legs. A bodyguard of nobles of the first class followed carrying golden palm branches and golden staves tipped with white yaks' tails. In the midst, the handsome old Maharana, erect and stately, rode his Arab charger. He was all in white, flowing white beard standing out

under his ears, turban and tunic of mulmul, incredible ropes of diamonds and pearls.

At the foot of the hill, he swung from his horse with the vigor of a young man. A splendid figure, he led the way through banks of *salaaming* nobility, under the arches, out across the marble steps to the canopied crimson throne, which had been placed high in the stern of the royal barge. His nobles gathered about him. A group of dancing girls made a vivid splash of color in the prow. Low in the center of the galley, a long bank of pale blue oars stirred the waters, and the barge swung away. A second barge trailed beside it. In the stern sat a single courtier, a Mohammedan nobleman of the first rank, the only Mohammedan in this court. It is said that this noble's ancestors were powerful *thakurs* (land owners). Because of opportune help in some long past crisis, the family hands down certain hereditary privileges, of which this special barge is one.

As the pageant shifted from hillside to lake, we followed it across the palace roof. We stood in embarrassed silence while the Prince made his painful way after us. His courtiers held him by the arms, and the heir of the most ancient royal dynasty in the world swung himself between them as though they had been crutches.

Below the palace, the lake narrows to an inlet framed in purple hills. Its curving shores are lined with long white reaches of palace and temple wall and terraced steps, broken by the green of overhanging trees, which never quite reach the lake, so that the line of blue water lapping against white wall is unbroken. Near the cen-

ter, an irregular mass of white, the Water Palace rises from the emerald green lake.

Slowly, with the romantic unreality of the *Idylls of the King*, the royal barges, light blue against the blue-green water, circled out toward the island. The irregular rhythm of muffled tom-toms beat so low that one felt rather than heard it. Strange minor melodies sung by the dancing girls floated back across the water. A crescent moon shone down on tree tops and white temple walls. As darkness fell, a light or two flashed golden on the water's edge.

Suddenly, there was a flash of rockets. Opposite us, across the lake, a long flight of steps led up to an old temple set back in the wooded heights. The glare of Roman candles and red fire brought the steps into high relief. Figures ran in and out of the shadows of the temple's arches. Emissaries from His Highness the Maharana joined us on the palace roof and gravely garlanded us with wreaths of *champak* flowers and jasmine.

Twilight had blotted out the royal barges with their medieval pageantry. Through the soft blackness of the dusk there was wafted to us the pulsing cadence of the dancing girls' voices, mingling with the heavy perfume of the *champak* flowers.

THE BRITISH IN INDIA

Only a Handful

An interval of centuries lies between the drowsy peacefulness of the Indian states and the brisker commercial atmosphere of the capitals of British India, Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, and the growing industrial centers.

The British in India are only a handful. Scattered through 320 million Indians there are 100,000 Englishmen, less than one to every 3,000 Indians. There are 70,000 English soldiers in India, and 3,000 members of the Civil, Educational, Engineering, Judicial and Police Services which administer the British *raj*. The attitude of the colonial Englishman toward his job and his neighbors is an essential element in the Indian's relation to the British Empire in general, and the *sahib* in particular. This mutual attitude is vital to understanding India.

A naked holy man squats on the curbstone of the Chowringhee, Calcutta's Fifth Avenue. Above him gleams the scarlet paint and golden crest of an Imperial British letter box, and the Roman lettering of a British street sign. In the center of the sunny street stands a Sikh policeman: fine physique, black beard, khaki shorts and shirt, and a neat, dark-blue turban. In one hand he holds an umbrella. With the other, he directs traffic, 'rickshas, Rolls-Royces, buffalo and bullock carts, Fords.

These fantastic contrasts are typical of the Englishman's genius for colonizing. We have only to look across our own border for an example of British tact: the French Canadians' differences of language, religion, tradition are suavely ignored. Similarly in India, except to forbid *sati* and to legalize the remarriage of widows, the *raj* has never interfered with religious customs. In spite of distressing social abuses, it refuses to become involved in the emotional frenzies that center round religious issues. India might make more rapid progress if the *raj* would lend its support to the efforts of her reformers. From the point of view of Empire, the *raj* shows its diplomacy in keeping hands off. I doubt whether we Americans with our passion for reform would be capable of such politic self-control.

The Englishman shows the greatest facility in adapting himself to unwonted conditions, and remolding them nearer to his heart's desire. In the crudest little railroad station restaurant in the *mofussil*, I found afternoon tea with jam or marmalade. For dinner there is always a fish course, no matter how many miles inland. The scrap of fish may be out of a tin, and the plating worn off the silver. But the fish knife and fork are of the orthodox British pattern, and one tine of the fork is always broader than the others.

Philosophically the Englishman has accepted the limitations of climate and adjusted himself to its rhythm. Even in cold weather, offices and stores do not open until ten o'clock. *Tiffin* is a leisurely affair at one or two. By half-past four men begin to appear on the

tennis courts, and offices are deserted at five. The dinner hour is eight or nine o'clock. In addition to the British bank holidays, there are numerous Hindu and Muslim holidays. The British observe them all, and they amount to about one-third of the year.

Except for automobiles roaring about the streets, life moves with a dignified and gracious tempo, even downtown in the heart of the Englishman's Calcutta and Bombay. Doormen in red turbans and sashes direct you at the entrance to banks and office buildings. Barefooted *chuprassis* squat inside waiting for answers to their messages. Paddle-shaped fans hang from the ceiling and rotate with the lazy peacefulness of the old-fashioned summer hotel. Under the fans sit rows and rows of *babus* bent over desks. The *sahibs* sit in private offices, screened from the public by a succession of earnest, anxious Indian assistants. The *sahibs* wear fresh white linen and silk. They have every psychological assurance and advantage. They radiate composure and well-being.

The English have surrounded life in the tropics with a fascinating glamor. The sorcery of the East is no story-teller's myth. English bungalows stand in ample grounds, surrounded by magnificent flowering trees and high walls. The rooms are spacious and high ceiled. In the cool of early morning, a barefooted servant in fresh white linen pushes a tray of *chhota hazri* (little breakfast) under the mosquito net. On the tray are tea, toast and fruit.

As warm weather closes in, servants lower the blinds

immediately after *tiffin*, and fasten thick mats in front of the doors and windows to keep out the heat. Every one sleeps. About half-past four the mats are taken away. All down the vista of green lawns, tennis nets have been set up, black tennis nets, for white ones would dazzle the eyes. Curtains of dark blue or green bunting across the ends of the grass courts reduce the glare. Little Indian boys in white coats and red turbans and sashes scramble for balls and reduce the *sahib's* exertions to a minimum. Some players wear towels dangling from their belts; most of them use the old-fashioned back of the shirt sleeve. A few wear bands around their foreheads. A table of cold drinks and a gallery of ladies are important parts of the game. Between sets there are loud cries of 'Boy,' and a scampering of servants for more ice.

Morning and evening, life centers on the broad verandas. The commonest piece of furniture is a glorified steamer chair, a strip of canvas hung between broad wooden arms which serve as shelves, table and foot rest. They are called lounging chairs, and, with no disparagement of what he has accomplished, they may be said to symbolize the life of the *sahib* in the East, his process of adaptation.

The multitude of servants filled me with envy. Their average pay is five to ten dollars a month, and they feed themselves. In addition to a cook, butler and second man, an ordinary family has its *dhobi*, or laundryman, *durzi*, or tailor, and *chaukidar*, or watchman. Instead of telephoning, they write a *chit* (note) and

send it by a bearer. The house servants are all men with the exception of the *ayah*, the *memsahib's* personal maid.

Visiting in England, I am always impressed with the prevalence of good manners. In busses, shops, lifts, customers and sales force, employers and servants, show an unconscious courtesy which is conspicuously lacking in the United States. A curious change occurs in India. The English, men and women alike, take on another personality. They seldom say please or thank you to an Indian servant. The men have a trick of calling 'B-h-o-y' in a short sharp bawl which is characteristic. In the residential districts, the cry echoes constantly over the compound walls.

It may be the restrictions of her life which make the average Englishwoman in India so extraordinarily bitter. She sends her children home to England as soon as they reach school age, because of the climate and also, I suspect, because she wants the stamp of the home culture upon them. She is always torn between staying in England with her children, or in India with her husband.

She seems to have a predisposition toward a martyr complex. She has a tradition which is curiously inconsistent with British reserve. It is that all the younger sons shipped off to India for the last two centuries have gone out as patriots, offering their lives upon the altar of the far-flung British Empire with the heroism of the soldier on the battle field. I doubt whether many have given up more attractive prospects at home. Anglo-Saxon young men do not express themselves in that way. India has been a heaven-sent solution to the baffling problem of the crowded British Isles: what shall we do with our younger sons? Yet the tradition persists. They refer to life in India as 'exile.' It is remarkable how many, retired on comfortable pensions, return to this land of exile.

I spent my childhood in a similarly artificial atmosphere, our own Western army posts, frontier forts, built

for fighting Indians, and now abandoned. Perhaps there is always a gentle haze over our memories of childhood, but I have an impression that the women on our Western army posts were more philosophical about putting up with hardship, and took life more easily than do the Englishwomen of the army and I. C. S.

Except for ceremonial appearances by wives of Governors and officials, few Englishwomen show interest in the life about them. I cannot believe that the women whose suffragette campaigns shook the Houses of Parliament to their foundations, would not have found means of reaching and influencing the women behind the *purdah* if they had been interested in doing so.

Seclusion of Indian women and failure to establish a normal social life have been unfortunate influences in relations between Englishmen and Indians. The most exclusive Englishwomen do associate with Indian Princes, dance with them in Delhi, make the rounds of their magnificent house parties during the cold weather. They say that many of the Princes are delightful, cultivated men. I found educated, high-caste Indians equally interesting. As it is, Englishwomen have created a *purdah* of their own, and have given themselves up to lives of petty interests and wire-pulling, frequently with demoralizing results.

Perhaps it is because the women are so removed from reality in their daily lives that they have a particularly unreal attitude toward Indians. In conversation with English men and women, I usually found the women more grimly intolerant. They mourn the old days.

I met a charming Englishwoman who has lived in India for twenty-two years since she went out as a girl of seventeen. I asked her which part of India she liked best.

"Not any now," she replied, "the atmosphere is all so different. Every time we come back from leave in England, I hate to face it."

"What is the difference?"

"The Indians have changed. They used to treat us with such respect, but not any more. It makes all the difference. It used to be so delightful here. Now it is so disappointing."

I asked her what had caused the change. She gave the answer that I heard many times, "Education. They get a smattering, enough to go to their heads and make them think they are as good as we are. That is where all this talk about *swaraj* comes from. It was a colossal mistake to educate them."

It sounded familiar, and I recognized the phrases of Mr. A. B. See, our elevator misogynist. He talks about women much as the Englishwoman talks about the Indian.

Five Englishwomen live in Marmugoa, the empty shell of what used to be Portuguese India. Among them is the wife of the Agent of the Steamship Line exporting manganese ore. The Portuguese have intermarried with the Indians and are tabu. The five white women are as isolated as though they lived on a desert island.

WEAVER'S HUT IN BENGAL WHERE A FAMILY OF FIVE EAT, SLEEP AND WORK

HOME AND STORE OF A MERCHANT ON THE GRAND TRUNK ROAD

THE WIDOWS AT BRINDABAN, PRAYING FOR THE DEAD

The Captain of a freighter and his wife took their meals at my table on the veranda of the old Portuguese palace, while they loaded iron ore for a trip to the United States. Every three years the Captains on this line are allowed to take their wives with them for one trip. The Captain's quiet little Scotch wife was winsome in her repressed excitement. The morning they landed, the Agent, living in Marmugoa, had gone aboard as usual. He remarked that his wife had never seen a freighter, and that he was planning to bring her down that afternoon. As he was leaving, he saw the Captain's wife on deck. He had not known that she was on board.

Half an hour later, the Captain received a *chit* from the Agent saying that his wife had a tennis engagement and would not be able to visit the boat. The real reason, of course, was that the Agent's wife did not care to meet the Captain's wife. As the latter would leave Marmugoa forever in a day or two it seemed incredible. But the Captain's wife insisted that I did not understand Englishwomen. She told me of an experience when her husband was Chief Officer of a freight boat and took her on a cruise. The Captain happened to be taking his wife, an Englishwoman, on the same trip. It was a six weeks' cruise, and these two were the only women on board. Not once did the Captain's wife speak to her. They never even met!

Then the Captain's wife said something which quite amused me. We had sat at the same table without speaking for two days. At dinner the second night, the

Captain was spinning yarns about New York, and I could not resist looking at him and laughing. Later the Scotchwoman said she had wanted to speak to me the night before, that she always wondered about people in out-of-the-way places, but she had thought that *I* was an Englishwoman!

It was late New Year's afternoon when they finished loading the manganese. Water and sky were merged in the gold and rose and crimson of an Eastern sunset. Slowly the old black freighter pulled up anchor and turned around. Churning a streak of white across the sapphire stillness of the harbor, she faced out into the blazing sunset, New York bound.

I was still watching the black speck of the boat in that sea of color when I heard women's voices. The five Englishwomen of Marmugoa were celebrating New Year's Day by coming down with a couple of men for a drink. They sat at a table less than thirty feet from me. One of them was the Agent's wife. They were most decorous. One woman had gin and ginger, one had a *chhota* peg (a short whiskey-and-soda). The other three had lime juice! Somebody's father was dying, and wasn't somebody a wonderful woman for sixty-two years old.

I watched them with interest, five very ordinary Englishwomen, none of them beautiful, nor homely, nor witty. But they had a sense of their own importance and distinction which had kept them self-sufficient through years of isolation. The same swanky spirit that makes the Agent's wife shrink from meeting

the Captain's wife, spurs the lonely young official, buried in the jungle, to shave every day, and wear dinner clothes every night. Where other Europeans break down and lose their morale, the Englishman is buoyed up by an inner conviction of being some one very special.

Englishmen whom one meets in remote and isolated spots usually make advances toward conversation in about the same ratio as American men, with perhaps a slightly longer interval of hesitation. Not so the women. I was impressed by the *sang-froid* of Englishwomen of the official and army castes. In the most remote and lonely outposts, they swept past as superbly as though they were shopping on Bond Street.

All Dressed Up and Nowhere to Go

It was in Portuguese India at the beginning of my travels that I had an experience with one type of Englishman. My first morning in Marmugoa I called on the President of the Bank to draw some money. He was a torpid old Portuguese, dark-skinned, heavy-lidded, in white linens and a ponderous gold watch chain. He said that as he was not one of Brown Brothers' agents, he could not advance money on my letter of credit. I explained: I had left Bombay on a bank holiday and my bank was closed. Thomas Cook's office gave me $75, all they had left in the till. They were closing at noon for a week-end of bank holidays, and it was too late to get more money. Their man assured me that, as Marmugoa was the capital of Portuguese India, the bank would surely honor my letter of credit. The Bank President shook his head slowly, and we went all over it again. I grew more insistent.

"You'll have to advance me some money because I have only about 30 *Rupees* ($10) left, and the fare from here to Madras, the nearest Brown Brothers agent, is 70 *Rupees*." The Bank President shook his head. I went over it again, explaining that we Americans do not have the same bank holidays as the English; that I had no warning that the bank would be closed for nearly a week; that I had to leave Bombay on that par-

ticular day in order to attend the Nationalist Congress, where I wanted to hear Gandhi; that—and this was the crucial point—I had only *Rs.* 30 left.

Imperturbably, he shook his head. I wanted to shake him. Instead, I tried to look as helpless as I felt, and asked him what to do. He looked blank and said he did not know, perhaps I had better wire to some one for money. I said I did not know any one. We had reached an impasse. We sat and looked at each other. Leisurely silence being one of the specialties of the East, I gave in first. Grudgingly, I admitted that I knew one man in Calcutta, and that I supposed I could telegraph to him. I hated to do it. I could not adequately explain in a telegram that I had plenty of money, but temporarily could not get at it. However, the banker had convinced me that I had nothing to hope for from him.

He thawed a little and agreed to send the telegram at once. That was on a Monday morning. I went back to the hotel. There was nowhere else to go. The Antigo Palaccio sprawling up the side of the hill, some *godowns* (storehouses) and coolies' huts had proved, to my surprise, to be all there was to the capital of Portuguese India. I was not happy. The telegram had been a blow to my pride. To telegraph for money at the beginning of my Indian travels seemed so improvident and footless.

It was very pleasant on the broad veranda of the Antigo Palaccio. The hotel servants, because I had no bearer, made me their special charge. One of them

had worked for an American family, and thought highly of our nation. He wanted me to take him as bearer, "Come for 30 *Rupees* ($10) a month, *Memsahib*, and be very big help, do everything."

He woke me at seven mornings, with a tray of *chhota hazri* and arranged water and towels for my bath. He assisted the Major Domo in serving excellently cooked dinners of eight and ten courses, whispering little encouragements, "Fresh fish, *Memsahib*, caught to-day, very good, take two." It was so hot, even in midwinter, that every one rose early, and undressed and lay down during the heat of the day. The people who drifted in and out of the hotel interested me: retired I. C. S.'s chiefly, who had found home cold and dreary after a life-time in the tropics, and idled their winters away along the Southern coast.

The suspense of waiting for a telegram increased like a geometric progression. I was disappointed not to have a reply on Tuesday, more so on Wednesday. Thursday by unkind fate was another holiday, and the office was closed. Friday morning, I was waiting when the office opened. No word. I returned to the Palaccio to think. Evidently the only person I knew in India was away—probably traveling in Burma. I could not understand why his office did not at least notify me of his absence. At all events, here I was in a frightfully uncomfortable position.

There must be something to do about it. Aside from the dilemma of how I was ever to get away, it was tantalizing to be cooped up here. I did not even

dare to poke around among the Indians lest I antagonize the officials of the place, on some of whom I must ultimately depend for getting away.

By this time, I had *Rs.* 18 left, and I had rolled up nearly a week's hotel bill. I went around to see my bank president. He assumed a poker face, and repeated that he could do nothing. He admitted that my letter of credit was perfectly regular. I offered to leave my trunk and my typewriter as security if he would advance me the money to reach Madras. I told him that my hotel bill was *Rs.* 60, the ticket to Madras *Rs.* 70 and *Rs.* 20 for food and incidentals, making *Rs.* 150 ($50) which I must have. He shook his head and said he could not consider such a thing. The only offer he made was to send my letter of credit back to a Bombay bank, and to give me the money on receipt of a wire of authorization. I flatly refused this offer, and said that nothing should separate me from my letter of credit. If it were lost in the mails, I should be in a desperate plight.

Finally, he suggested that I see the British Consul who had an office on the ground floor of the Antigo Palaccio. I told him that it was no concern of the British Consul to help an American and that, as there was no American Consul here, there was no one for me to appeal to; that was the reason that he must help me out. He was unmoved.

I came away very gloomy at the necessity of going through this begging business again with the British Consul. It was not a pleasant rôle. I think the thing

that annoyed me most was a feeling that it was probably my own fault, though I could not just see where. The British Consul's office was already closed for the day, so, after a final visit to the telegraph office, I could only wait through another long night.

In the morning, I dressed very carefully, selecting a brown-and-white silk with an accordion-pleated skirt that seemed both becoming and sedate. I wore a hat instead of my *topee*. The Consul had gone out when I called at nine, but would be in at ten. When I returned at exactly ten he had come in and gone out again, so I sat down in his anteroom and grimly waited. After an hour or more, I was ushered into his presence. In white linens, monocled, pink and rather plump, with a *punkah* swinging over his head, and a row of *salaaming* assistants, he gave an impression of being conscious of his state, and of enjoying it. I determined that I was going to like and trust him because, after all, there was no alternative.

I told him my story as briefly as possible. I ended by saying that I had a new portable Remington typewriter and a steamer trunk with some new dresses which I had just picked up in Paris, and I offered to leave them both as security if he would advance me $50 until I could reach Madras. He hemmed and hawed, and acted bored and annoyed. He made disagreeable remarks such as, "Why will you ladies get into such messes?", and "Why did you ever want to come down here anyway?" I swallowed my pride, and tried to look more helpless. Because, of course, men always want

to help really helpless women, and the only reason I was having so much trouble was because I was not the right type.

He urged that it was really the Portuguese's business to advance the money. I said I had seen him the previous afternoon. He gave one of his clerks a *chit* for the banker and sent me back to see him. The banker was even less polite than on my previous visits. He was grumpy and short. He said that he would advance me *Rs.* 150 on the Consul's written guarantee, a 15-day note at 10 per cent. When I urged that the Consul did not know me, and that he should let me sign the note myself, he looked disagreeable, and asked why he should trust me if my own Consul would not; he insisted on calling him 'my' Consul.

If I could have walked to Bombay or Madras, I should certainly have done so rather than go back to the Consul with this offer. It seemed so preposterous. They were all perfectly familiar with letters of credit, and could see that mine was regular. Yet here I was, being buffeted back and forth like a tramp trying to beat his way.

I swallowed some more pride, quite a lot of it this time, and went in to see the Consul again. He said that he had no fund for such emergencies, and that he would have to make a personal advance, which he really did not feel called upon to do. I reminded him that my typewriter alone was worth more than the $50, and that he was not running any great risk. He dismissed me saying that he would think it over and let me know.

It was noon by this time. It was nearly three when a messenger arrived with a *chit* from the Consul saying that he could do nothing for me, and suggesting that I see the banker. I was so angry that I could easily have assassinated that Consul. I think he was contemptible, and time and distance have done nothing to soften my opinion of that specimen of His Majesty's Consular Service.

I went down to the little railroad station. A second-class ticket to Madras—this was the beginning of my second-class traveling—would be only $11, just half of a first-class ticket. I came back to the hotel and sent for the proprietor. He was a kindly faced Portuguese whom I had not seen before. I told him that I had run short of money. Would he permit me to leave my trunk as security for my hotel bill until I could reach Madras? After my experiences with the British Consul and the banker, I nearly fell on this man's neck when he treated me like a human being. He must have known all that was going on; probably every word that had been said had been reported to him. Yet he was courtesy itself. He said that he knew an American woman would not be traveling so far from home unless she had plenty of money, and that he would not think of holding my trunk as security. If I happened to be stopping at the Connemara in Madras, I could give the Manager the amount of my bill, as the two hotels were under the same management.

It is difficult to express how this courtesy reassured me. I had been so persecuted by the other two men

that I began to feel like an adventuress. The urbanity and kindliness of this Portuguese gentleman were as grateful as rain in the desert. I wanted dreadfully to ask him to lend me the necessary money—I had cut it down to a paltry $15 now—but he was so decent that I could not bear to ask anything more of him. I determined that the old banker should do his duty. Armed with fresh courage, I set out again in pursuit of the banker. The hotel bill was off my mind. My ticket, second-class, would be *Rs.* 32; allowing *Rs.* 5 for tips, and *Rs.* 10 for two days' meals, which would be shaving about as close as possible, I could reach Madras with *Rs.* 47: I had *Rs.* 10 left. If I could get *Rs.* 40 ($14.40), somehow or other, I should be a free woman again.

It being Saturday, the bank was closed. I found that my man was expected back on the 5:30 launch from Old Goa. When he came up the gangway with his gold seals dangling and his gold-headed cane, I was waiting for him. I spoke very firmly. I told him that I was not going to sit around there any longer; that I must take the seven o'clock train the next morning—there was only one train a day, and that he would have to be a sport and lend me $14.40. I said I heard he was a very rich man, and I knew $14.40 was nothing to him one way or the other, and that it really was not taking such an awfully big chance. I told him everything I could think of. As I remember, I talked a good deal. When I stopped, he looked dazed and pulled a big wad out of his pocket and peeled off four

ten *rupee* notes. I asked if he wanted me to sign a receipt, and he said sulkily, "No, what good would it do me?"

I thanked him effusively and pranced back to the hotel. Those four notes were worth as much to me as my whole letter of credit. I buttoned them carefully into my money belt, and was afraid to go to sleep lest, somehow, they should vanish overnight.

I caught the train next morning, trunk, typewriter and all, and felt as though I were escaping from jail. I sent the money back the very day I reached Madras, but I have never had an acknowledgment, though I wrote to the old lad three times.

I should add that my Calcutta friend to whom I wired for *Rs.* 150 on that memorable Monday, received the message Tuesday morning, and wired me *Rs.* 200 inside of an hour. The telegram lost itself in the System, and it took six months to recover it.

Doric Delhi

THE British *raj* has built substantial monuments in India, 38,000 miles of railroad, with its manifold bearings on the economic, social and religious life of the people; a network of metaled roads for bullock and buffalo carts; a vast system of irrigation works. Two irrigation projects now under way will spread over an area of twelve million acres, bringing the total irrigated land in British India up to thirty-six million acres, which is equivalent to all the New England states, excluding Vermont. The working out of projected hydro-electric developments will give India a leading position in this respect, among the countries of the world.

Aside from material advantages, one of the most reassuring aspects of British rule is the general Indian recognition of British integrity and fair play. Bitterly as Nationalist leaders criticize the *raj* and its policies, they agree in appreciation of the individual Englishman. Gokhale, their greatest political leader of the last generation, in one of his speeches, courageously referred to British officials as "a body of picked men; that man for man they are better than ourselves; they have a higher standard of duty, higher notions of patriotism, higher notions of loyalty to each other, higher notions of organized work and of discipline."

"The British are good people," says Lajpat Rai, an eminent Nationalist leader; "in all personal dealings they are honest, frank and reliable. But when national interests are at stake, and when the interest of the nation dictates a different line of policy, they can not help following the latter, however much injustice and hardship they may inflict upon others in doing so."

Several Indians told me that they had rather take a case before an English than an Indian judge. As a Madrassi put it, "The English Judge gets paid twice as much, so he doesn't have as much temptation to expect bribes." Two officials who had been loaned to different Indian states by the *raj* said that they should prefer returning to British India, as the corruption was so general in the Indian states that it was difficult to accomplish anything.

Another British trait which appeals to the Indian is a certain punctilio. Indians told me with kindling appreciation of Englishmen stationed alone in the jungle, a hundred miles from the nearest neighbor, who dressed for dinner every night. It is the last thing an Indian would do, but he recognizes it as high-caste.

When the Englishman wishes, he can be most charming. An English Colonel gave a series of talks on biology for the Y. M. C. A. of an Indian city. An Indian scientist, educated in England, who had made a reputation for his research work—on sponges perhaps —was chairman. The Colonel paid graceful tribute to the Indian's achievements, and proceeded to give a popular talk on biology. When he had finished, the

Indian, after some flowery and insincere-sounding compliments, proceeded to carp and quibble over fine points that had no place in a popular lecture. The Indian, in his pale yellow turban, and orange shawl, was a tall, handsome man, but he made his points with a what-a-smart-boy-am-I air that was most tiresome. The Colonel, a slim man with finely modeled features, had the pink and white coloring of a Raeburn portrait. He listened to it all with a perfect manner of interested acquiescence.

The English do not always acquit themselves so well. Beneath their good manners and their integrity, they sometimes show a hardness like flint. A district officer who acted as Judge over a remote district told me that he never let any Indian off who was brought before him, no matter what the charge.

"When a man gets into trouble, it is a popular game to have some woman borrow a baby, and come and weep at the Judge's feet, and pretend that the man is her husband. I never pay any attention to them. They are all liars and I give them all as stiff sentences as I can. So many of them lie and perjure their way out, that I can at least bring up the average by punishing every one that gets into my clutches."

Personally this man was genial and pleasant. He gave no evidence of being exceptional, and yet I think he must have been, or English justice would not have earned its reputation for fair play. Something of his obstinate hardness, combined with a theoretical integrity, is characteristic. As we read the pages of Indian

history, her Indian rulers stand out as capricious, tyrannical, autocratic. I think that this austere British integrity is baffling to the Indian. It discourages affection.

Among the Englishmen who have served the *raj*, a small distinguished group have achieved international fame for their research into India's past, her traditions, her art; and for their translations from her classics. A larger group have shown keen and scholarly interest in Indian culture. Among the numerous interesting publications of the *raj* is a work in countless volumes called the *District Gazetteer*. It describes the fauna and flora, the resources and folkways of every inch of the country, including the Indian states. It is a compilation of the lives of many Englishmen. Far from being a dry reference work, it is a fascinating human document. Descriptions of old ruins, of festivals and ceremonials, are written with that simplicity and insight which give the highest literary charm.

When they first occupied India, the English showed little interest in India's past. They were too much engrossed in the opportunities of the moment. They tore down acres of palaces, or ruthlessly partitioned them off for use as offices and *godowns*. They ignored her art, and sprinkled India with hideous gingerbread buildings of which the Victoria Terminal, Bombay, is a formidable example. Lord Curzon was not a popular Viceroy. His partition of Bengal was never forgiven. But he stands out as one of the Englishmen to whom India is forever indebted because of his 'Ancient Monuments Preservation Act' by which he preserved and expertly restored many of her old palaces and temples.

It is something of a shock, twenty-five years after Lord Curzon's beneficent example, to see what the *raj* is building to-day, as a fitting successor to the long line of capitals of Delhi. This ultimate city, following the famous, historic Delhis of the Mogul and earlier Empires, shows no trace of either Mogul or Hindu architecture. It is all Greek and is laid out on a scale of colossal magnificence. The estimates called for twenty million dollars, but it cost over forty-five millions. It stands empty eight months every year while the Government moves to Simla for the hot weather. On those barren, treeless plains outside the city of Delhi, where only jackals prowled, the *raj* has laid out vast gardens and parks, several hundred miles of streets, forests of lamp posts, acres of white marble and stucco houses, imposing marble administration buildings, a wilderness of Doric and Corinthian columns, architraves and entablatures. But why Greek?

This new Delhi of white marble and Greek porticoes which glitter blindingly in the Indian sunlight typifies the attitude of the average Englishman toward India, devoid of sympathy or even interest. I met an interesting Englishman in the Educational Service. His hobby was excavation, and he had made several archeological finds. Concerning the present-day Indian, he showed neither curiosity nor interest. He was implacably scornful. He told many stories to show that Indians were an hysterical, emotional lot, easily roused, and easily calmed. You had to treat them as you would an hysterical woman, slap them, or douse them in cold water.

The educational policy of the *raj* has been the subject of bitter controversy ever since it was outlined by Lord Macaulay in his famous *Minute* of a century ago. The British have had no thought of educating the masses. Their purpose has been to select a small group for higher education, in order to furnish the thousands of clerks and petty officials necessary for the administrative machinery of one-fifth of the population of the world. The result, as the British freely admit has been top-heavy, "because it has always lacked the solid foundation provided by a broad system of popular education." (Sir Valentine Chirol.) An advertisement in a Calcutta paper offering a salary of forty or fifty dollars a month for a man with a B. A. degree brings from one to two hundred applicants.

Lord Macaulay's *Minute* which still rather dominates the educational policy, provided for organizing the schools on Western lines, using the English language, English text books, English classics. Children coming from homes where no English is spoken have to learn to study in an unfamiliar language from books whose backgrounds of snow storms, Sunday schools and Christmas trees are strange and confusing. As a result, many students learn their lessons by parrot-like memorizing. Education becomes a process of cramming to pass examinations with little effort to relate the lessons to the students' lives or to impart sympathetic understanding of Western culture.

The importance of classics and the humanities in English universities has made it natural that their

graduates should insist upon the same emphasis in India. The sciences, which India particularly needs, have been almost ignored. There is little in the Indian's education to stimulate invention and initiative. The Universities turn out thousands of young men prepared to be lawyers, but few engineers, agriculturists, or men trained to work with their hands.

Indian statistics of illiteracy are so shocking that they need little comment. Only eight per cent of the people of India can read or write the simplest letter; two per cent of the women, twelve per cent of the men. The urgency of the situation was well stated by Lord Curzon himself as far back as 1901:

"It cannot be a right thing that three out of every four country villages should still be without a school, and that not much more than three million boys, or less than one-fifth of the total boys of school-going age should be in receipt of primary education. . . . What is the greatest danger in India? What is the source of suspicion, superstition, outbreaks, crime, yes, and also much of the agrarian discontent and suffering among the masses? It is ignorance. And what is the only antidote to ignorance? Knowledge. In proportion as we teach the masses, so shall we make their lot happier, and in proportion as they are happier, so they will become more useful members of the body politic."

These words were spoken more than a quarter of a century ago. Commissions have studied the situation and reported in the meantime. And still, less than one-quarter of the boys of school-going age to-day reach a

standard of bare literacy. There are 730,000 villages in India, but only 140,000 primary schools, less than one to every five villages. With the exception of small groups in the cities, practically all Indian women are illiterate. Restrictions of *purdah* and child marriage will make improvement especially slow and difficult in the case of girls. The increase in the number of boys attending school in 1924-5 was ten times that of girls. Of five little girls beginning school, only one reaches the fourth primary grade, the equivalent of literacy.

In spite of bitter criticism of British rule, I heard few stories of individual outrages. The British Government's determination to increase the number of Indians holding responsible positions in the services, and to grant progressive constitutional reforms, has been effective in toning down a certain white arrogance and insolence which sometimes made life difficult for a self-respecting Indian.

India's Constitutional Reforms of 1919 (the Montagu-Chelmsford Report) were a reward for loyal support of the Empire during the War. They were a bitter disappointment to the Nationalists. They hinge on the principle of diarchy, which divides the Government into transferred subjects, handed over to Indians to administer, and reserved subjects of which the *raj* keeps control. Finance is a reserved subject. Nationalists complain that their power over such transferred subjects as agriculture, education, roads and public health is purely nominal inasmuch as their plans are subject to the financial control of the British *raj*. Many In-

dian leaders withdrew from all Government positions on the ground that the Reforms were unworkable. This was the basis of Gandhi's noncoöperation campaign.

The Reforms provided for a trial period of ten years. The decade is nearly up, and the Simon Commission is to report as to the desirability of granting further reforms. Indian resentment of the failure to include an Indian on the Commission led to an attempted boycott. It is not probable that the *raj* will permit anything to interfere with the functioning of a Parliamentary Commission. It is also unlikely that the Commission's report will, under the circumstances, win Indian approval.

Little as the Reforms so far granted have satisfied India, the Britisher, official and civilian alike, regards them as preposterous weakening or sentimental drivel. He is baffled and aggrieved by any compromise on the part of Whitehall and Parliament. He still regards India as his particular oyster. He is annoyed and exasperated by the Indianization of the Services.

A British Colonel told me with pride that he was the fifth generation of his family to live in India. He was so scornful and contemptuous about the natives of this land where he and his ancestors had lived for over a century that I cast about for a reason. I suspect that his bitterness was caused by fear—perhaps an unconscious fear. For five generations his family have found a comfortable berth in India. If present tendencies continue, the berth promises to grow progressively less agreeable.

Tragedy

It is impossible to write of the British in India even to-day without referring to the Amritsar tragedy of ten years ago. It was in April, 1919, that General Dyer ordered his soldiers to fire on a crowd of several thousand unarmed Sikhs, men, women and children. The General was ultimately retired from India.

I asked a number of English people their opinion of the affair. Most of them sided with General Dyer. Some were a bit mysterious, with hints of plots and dark secrets. Others were indignant with Government for letting down one of her officers under any circumstance. The Indians were deeply affected. They did not rant, but they spoke with an impressive solemnity and bitterness. This tragic affair rankles grievously, and has caused mutual distrust and antagonism.

I had not adequately appreciated until I went there the fact that Amritsar is the capital of the Sikhs. The Sikhs have been a mainstay to the British in India. They are a hardy Northern people, tall, quick, aggressive, laughing and jolly, courageous fighters, famous for their loyalty to the *raj*. The Indian police taken to China by the British to protect their concessions are Sikhs. I recognized Sikhs among the police in Calcutta. Everywhere they are found upholding the law and the power of the British *raj*.

I arrived in Amritsar on the first day of the Indian spring. Every one was going to a *mela.* The men wore fresh turbans of a lovely mustard-yellow organdy to match the mustard flowers blooming in the fields. The women wore glittering *saris* of crimson and purple and emerald-green, picked out with gold brocade, and their faces were not veiled.

There was more of a sense of prosperity and ambition than I had seen in other parts of India. The men were tall and powerful and aggressive. The women were gay and responsive. They all laughed and chattered as they swung along. The road was dotted with *tongas* carrying happy family parties to the *mela,* and with no smothering curtains. Three *tongas* passed us, careering over ditches; young men racing with all the abandon and recklessness of Western holiday-makers.

Hundreds of happy, laughing family groups squatted in little circles, in the temple grounds. I had met a Sikh on the train who asked if he might show me around. Eagerly he brought me samples of all the Indian delicacies, patties and balls of minced-up things fried in *ghee;* extravagantly sticky, rich sweets, each in a bowl of green leaves. The Sikh introduced some of his friends and we had our own little picnic. They were pleased when I told them how much I liked the Sikh people, and what a pleasure it was to see them with their wives.

In the afternoon, my Sikh friend took me to see the famous Golden Temple. He led me through some gardens which had been left by a *rajah* as a retreat for

sadhus and ascetics. At the end of a cloister, we came to an arched window looking down over the Golden Temple. We watched the stream of people, tall handsome Sikhs, and their pretty wives; pilgrims from all over India who stopped in passing to pay their respects at the Sikh temple; besides five Mongolian Buddhists, with orange robes, long bead rosaries, and queer ear-flapped caps pulled down over their heads.

Sitting in the marble archway, I asked the Sikh to tell me of the feeling about the Amritsar affair, here where it had happened. The animation left his face, and he became very grave. He told me of Sikh loyalty to the British *raj* during the Mutiny, the Afghan uprisings, and the recent War. He told the story of his own family for generations, and of their part in this War, of wounds and gassing, of decorations and medals. On top of all this, came an atrocity which made the whole world pause.

"It will never be the same with us Sikhs again," he concluded. "We have a tradition of loyalty to the *raj* in our family, but the memory of *Jallianwallah Bagh* will be more powerful than our traditions. . . ." I asked to see the Garden, and the Sikh said, "Please do not make any comment of any sort while there." It seems that after all these years, they feel it unwise to express an opinion where there might be listening ears.

We walked round the Garden in silence. It was a grim sight, an ordinary Indian garden, not very well kept up, with graveled walks and flower-beds and, at one side, a well and one or two small trees. The Gar-

den is completely enclosed by high walls and the sheer sides of tall buildings. In addition to the main entrance there were two narrow gateways in the far corners. Except for the well, there was no shelter of any sort.

The situation that led up to the shooting is quickly told. Following their coöperation during the War, Indians were deeply aggrieved when, at its conclusion, the Rowlatt Acts were passed, giving Government power to seize and imprison without trial any one suspected of sedition. Agitation and discontent broke out all over India. Indian mobs killed five Englishmen at Amritsar, and beat a woman missionary. General Dyer prohibited all public meetings and, when the people, unarmed and with their women and children, gathered in this Garden as the Sikhs claim had been their custom for many years, he ordered his men to fire on them. I quote the account of Sir Valentine Chirol, a conservative British authority:

"Only those perhaps who have visited the *Bagh* after studying the evidence given by General Dyer . . . can realize the full horror of the tragedy enacted there. It was to dig so sinister a gulf between the ruling and the subject race that the story of that black day in the annals of British India can not be ignored.

"The *Bagh*, once a Garden, has long been, save for one clump of old trees, an open space covering perhaps the area of Trafalgar Square; enclosed on every side by mud walls, with tall houses rising in many places close up against and above them. The approaches are few and extremely narrow. By one of them, leading

on to the highest ground in the *Bagh*, General Dyer with a party of fifty Ghurka entered the *Bagh* and saw at a distance of perhaps one hundred yards a dense crowd, variously estimated at from six to ten thousand, most of them engaged in listening to speeches.

"General Dyer assumed, rightly enough, that this was a public meeting in contravention of his orders, and a seditious one. Without a word of warning, he opened, and kept upon them a fusillade that did not stop until, as he himself said, his party's ammunition was almost exhausted, though the panic-stricken multitude broke at once, struggling to escape through the narrow exits, or attempting vainly to climb the walls, or in despair, throwing themselves flat on the ground. General Dyer, according to his own statement, personally directed the firing to the points where the crowd was thickest. The 'targets' he declared were 'good,' and by the time he and his men went off, by the same way they had come, they had killed 379 according to the official figures given some months later by Government, and they left about 1,200 wounded on the ground, for whom he did not consider it his 'job' to provide any help whatever." (*India*, p. 208.)

There is a difference of opinion about the number killed. Sir Valentine quotes the official figures without comment. The *London Times* in using these figures, 379 killed and 1,200 wounded, adds, "The general impression was and remains that the casualties were much greater." (July 25, 1927.) Another English writer,

Edward Thompson, states that they killed 1,500 people in less than ten minutes.

General Dyer refused to permit the Sikhs to go to the aid of those left wounded and dying in the Garden, and their moans and cries for water echoed through the city all night. Shortly afterward, General Dyer issued his famous 'crawling order.' Indians passing through certain main streets of Amritsar had to do so on their knees—further atonement for the five Englishmen.

The Sikh showed me many bullet holes in the walls across the far end of the Garden, indicating them with a quiet gesture, but making no comment. After we had left the Garden and were well away, he said:

"Any one is liable to make mistakes. If the *raj* had shown right away that it did not approve of what General Dyer had done, it would have made all the difference in the world to us. But, when they retired the General, after doing nothing for many months, it was too late to do much good. And when his friends in India and England gave him £30,000 and a jeweled sword in gratitude for his being a hero, as they called it, we saw pretty well how they really felt."

General Dyer died during the summer of 1927. The *London Morning Post* spread in heavy black headlines across its front page 'The Man Who Saved India.' As I read it, I thought back to that first day of spring in Amritsar, sitting in the marble arch overlooking the Golden Temple, and of the sadness in the face of the Sikh.

White Poppies

Fields of white poppies. They are the opium farms of Bengal, owned and operated by the British Government. The virginal white flowers are thrown into presses from which oozes a sticky black juice. It is dried in cakes of one and two pounds' weight which have a pungent, sickish odor.

Production, distribution, even selling opium to the consumer, are under direct control of the British Government. More than 6,000 retail shops sell opium in British India. Consumption varies in the different provinces. Two thousand three hundred men and women were counted entering one of Calcutta's opium shops in a single day.

I visited a shop just off Chowringhee, the main boulevard of Calcutta. It was a darkish slit in the wall, just wide enough for one person to squeeze in past another coming out. It reached back into a mysterious darkness. On the edge of this twilight zone crouched a naked *sadhu.* His long hair, matted with filth and ashes of cow dung, hung in ropes about his neck. He wore a loin cloth and strings of brown beads. His eyes had a wild glare, partly fanatic, but chiefly drug-crazed. He was singing in a minor off-tune quaver, and he held out a brass begging bowl. Because

of their traditional respect for holy men, the Indians let him squat there until enough *pice* had dropped into his bowl to buy his daily opium. It happened that I saw a *sadhu* in every opium shop I visited, both in city and country.

Squatting on the counter of the Calcutta shop, behind a tiny, iron-barred window, sat a man rolling cubes of sticky brown opium in a green leaf, and wrapping them, with a deft turn of the wrist, in a bit of newpaper. Beside him sat a man taking in a steady stream of one *anna* pieces (two cents) in exchange for the bits of opium. Each pellet was perhaps one-quarter the size of a lump of sugar.

The line of men waiting to push into the shop reached down the street. They were of all sorts, coolies in a dust-colored loin cloth and a rag of dirty turban; *babus*, clerks, from the surrounding offices in various adaptations of black alpaca and European dress; men of the upper class in fresh white *dhotis* and tunics of fine linen.

Most Indian opium is eaten or mixed with water and swallowed. Opium smoking is to be found in the cities, but is not as popular as in China. The opium-eater carries his tiny balls of opium in a pill box, tucked into the cloth about his waist. He begins taking it as a stimulant against fatigue and hunger or to deaden pain.

One *anna* (two cents) buys six and three-quarter grains of opium. An Indian of about fifty told me that he had been taking it four years. He began during

an attack of inflammatory rheumatism, and two cents' worth lasted three days, two doses a day. Now he takes that amount in one day, a dose in the morning on an empty stomach, and another at the end of the day's work when he begins to feel fagged. He illustrated how he tosses it off with a swallow of tea.

The League of Nations' medical experts estimated, as an index figure for normal medical consumption, twelve pounds per year per ten thousand of population in any community. The villages of India average about this figure, but conditions in the cities are shocking. Calcutta uses 288 pounds per 10,000 population, which is twenty-four times the League's index rate. On the vast tea plantations of Burma and Assam, coolies work under almost unbearable conditions of climate and poverty. In Rangoon, Burma, opium consumption averages 216; in Mergui, 286, as compared with the normal index rate of 12 pounds per year. The average for the entire province of Assam is 104.

Old addicts reach the point where they take as much as a *rupee's* worth at a time. Defenders of the Government's licensing system point out that the shop sells a limited amount to any customer. The limit, however, is one *tola* (188 grains), and the customer may buy this amount every day. In the cities, there is nothing to prevent his making the rounds of the shops, or repeating in the same shop.

Drugging of babies is one of the most serious phases of the problem. Women working in the mills give their babies opium so that they will not cry to be nursed.

Women in the villages dope their babies before leaving them to work in the fields. Estimates of the babies drugged, especially in the industrial districts, range from 50 to 90 per cent of all the babies under two years old.

Outposts of Empire

THE English pioneer in India is quite different from the I. C. S. and the army. All over the world, pioneers are pioneers. I met isolated English men and women in strange, out-of-the-way places: riding horseback with little royal Princes in the Indian states; on tea plantations; an Englishwoman secretary to a scholar in a remote school. And I met a few Englishwomen married to Indians of position, members of the Cabinet in Indian states, handsome women, arrogant women, women whose faces in repose showed that they had paid a heavy price for being rebels.

One English engineer and his family, clinging comfortably to the outposts of Empire, have achieved a delightful blending of domesticity and adventure. If life ever bored them, they did not show it. They were a Mr. and Mrs. Hughes and their son and daughter. Mr. Hughes is installing a rock-crushing machine which he said was the most ambitious piece of machinery from there to the equator. The Maharajah who owns the deposits of trap rock began operations five or six years ago. Two young engineers preceded Mr. Hughes. They started the pit and ordered the machinery.

When Mr. Hughes arrived three years ago, there were fly wheels weighing 13,000 pounds, boilers, and other bits of machinery strewn over the country for the

entire six miles to the railroad tracks. Gradually he picked up the pieces, and had them rolled across the plains and through streams by women coolies. They passed tree trunks through the boilers and round pieces, and put 50 to 100 coolies on each end to push or pull. The worst part was going down hill when sometimes a heavy piece got away from them. But he added, with the casual air of the Englishman in the tropics, "The coolies are a wild lot, and have a very good idea of taking care of themselves. I impressed upon them that if they saw anything begin to roll, they must drop everything and run—and they ran." He said that he could not use bullocks at all because there was no way of making the bullocks realize when to run.

Mr. Hughes has laid five miles of railroad track, and loads his freight cars direct from the crusher. He has set up a small rock-crusher, operated by a marine engine. This engine, with one man to run and two to feed it, will do the work of a hundred coolies. He is setting up another unit of two large crushers with a capacity of forty tons an hour. Even at twenty-five tons an hour, which is about as fast as they can feed it, each of these crushers will turn out every hour as much rock as 1,000 coolies hammering stone by hand can break in a ten-hour day. This particular rock is excellent for road-making, and the demand for it is unlimited.

The silent crushers, waiting to be unleashed, dramatized the process of displacing hand labor as they frowned down, gigantic and awkward, at the antlike

coolies squatting on the rock piles at their feet. Several thousand coolies, men and women, quarried the rock, and carried it in baskets on their heads to piles where other coolies broke it into small pieces with their hammers. Soon the coolies will be driven out, and the machines, with a few pigmy men in attendance, will have the desert to themselves.

Pioneer home life interested me even more than engineering accomplishments. The Hughes have a comfortable bungalow, with spacious wings and graveled drives. All about, the sun beats down on yellow desert, but the house is surrounded by flower beds, and they keep a half dozen *malis* (gardeners) at work.

They have an electric dynamo, and current for light and fans costs about a dollar and a half a month. This dynamo also runs the moving picture machine, which shows as large and steady a picture as most movie houses. They have an arrangement with a Calcutta house to send them two new reels each week, and they return the old ones to the lending library. They were tinkering with a radio, but broadcasting is not yet very well organized in Asia. They have a piano, books, English magazines and papers. Every day the branch railroad brings them ice and mail.

The family divides up many of the subcontractor's functions in order to eliminate his grafting. There is nothing of the martyr complex about the pioneer woman. She does her part! Mrs. Hughes has charge of the payroll. She showed me the iron safe where she

keeps the money. They carry their revolvers quite casually. A *durzi* (tailor) squats in a corner of one of the porches. He corresponds to a sewing woman. Mrs. Hughes has had this man for several years. She took him to Calcutta for five days, and he learned to do hemstitching, embroidery, beading and braiding. She proudly showed me samples of his work. This was in preparation for a leave they were to spend in England, their first in five years.

They had no warning of my arrival, but invited me to join them at their breakfast, an elaborate meal of five courses. We were served by half a dozen servants in fresh white linen and high green turbans the following menu:

Broiled Sardines on Toast
Rice and delicious Curry and Chutney
Mixed Grill of Sausage, Bacon and Ham. (An especial delicacy in India where pigs are uncommon.)
Wafer-thin Bread and Butter Sandwiches with Preserves; Cakes and Pastries (from Firpo, the famous Calcutta caterer).
Fruits and Candies.

When I was alone with her, I asked the daughter, a girl in her early twenties, if she would not be glad to get back to England. She said yes, but added, "You would be surprised at how the time flies. I never have time to be bored." I asked her what she did. She laughed, "Nothing very exciting. There's the housekeeping, and Mother and I help the *durzi* with the sewing. We all

take a nap in the middle of the day, and after that we have tea, and play mah jong, and then dinner, and first thing you know, it's time to go to bed."

At Houbigant's in Paris on my way out I bought a bottle of what they said was one of their latest extracts. On Mrs. Hughes' bureau, I saw a bottle of the same perfume. It was typical of their zest for life, and their magical knack of making the desert blossom like the rose.

The Anglo-Indian

THE most pathetic of India's minority groups are the mixed bloods. They were formerly called Eurasians; but they coveted the name Anglo-Indian, which had been generally applied to the British-born residents of India and, a few years ago, they were officially given this designation. It does them not much good that I could see, and creates confusion.

They number 113,000 and, call them what you will, there is little chance of mistaking the mixed blood for the pure. Some of the women are almost blonde and very pretty. Most of them have an anemic look. They speak in a metallic falsetto with a curious singsong accent. They always wear European clothes. The little girls appear in carefully washed and ironed white dresses, their legs so thin that their stockings always seem to wrinkle around the ankles.

They are ostracized by both English and Indians. They in turn look down on the Indian with a scorn that is acid with hatred, for it is their Indian blood that is their curse. They fawn upon the English and make pitiful advances to them. They always speak of England as 'home,' though they may never have been there, and they are forever vainly trying to include themselves with the British.

They gather in the big cities and industrial centers.

They have until recent years had a virtual monopoly of positions on the railroads, as station agents, and ticket inspectors. The engineers are often English. As usual, it is the girls who have the worst of it. There are few positions for these women in India. British intolerance adds to their burdens.

My hair-dresser in Calcutta had two English girl assistants. One day, she was in despair: both had been taken sick; one was going back to England; she did not know what to do; she was having to turn customers away. I asked why she did not engage one of the hundreds of Anglo-Indian girls who are always out of work in Calcutta, and who take very low wages. She shook her head, "You do not realize that the class of customers I have would not tolerate it. I have the very finest ladies as customers."

"Yes," I said, "but many of them have Indian *ayahs* (maids)."

"That," she replied, "is quite different."

I met a good many of these Anglo-Indian women traveling second-class. They used to watch me with the greatest interest. Whenever I looked up, I found their eyes on me. They were eager to talk, and took pains to establish themselves as 'we English.' One pretty girl, a teacher in the Government school in a railroad repair-works town, was returning from a vacation in Travancore. She said she was interested in observing the habits of the natives there, as they were quite different from northern India where she lived. I immediately thought of matriarchy, for Travancore is one of

the few places in the world where it still exists. She had never heard of it. However, she went on, "You know the natives down there all squat on the ground and eat with their fingers—ugh, it is disgusting." As it is the custom of all classes in all parts of India to squat on the ground and eat with their fingers, I could only conclude that she was making a great effort to show me how far removed her life was from even the knowledge of Indian customs and manners.

I remember a young man sitting opposite me on the train one evening. He was slender, with golden-yellow hair, and fair skin. He had the appearance of a well-born Englishman, and I wondered why he was traveling second-class—until he spoke. There was no mistaking his singsong inflection.

With nervous motions of his fine slender hands, he lit a cigarette. In his eyes was a look of haunting sadness. He leaned far out the window, letting the wind blow through his hair. Then he sank his head in his hands and sat for an hour, oblivious to every one, his mop of golden hair shining in the late sunlight. After he left the carriage, another man told his story. He was a motor mechanic working in the railroad shops in Calcutta. He had been ordered on a repair job up-country on an hour's notice: didn't even have time to go home and get his bedding-roll. The story seemed an anti-climax to the honey-colored hair and piercing eyes. I decided that it was not anticlimax, that it was the quintessence of tragedy, for a man with those eyes and hands to spend his life in the railroad shops of Calcutta.

Some of the Anglo-Indians sink to appalling depths. I saw a family in Asansol that had nearly reached the bottom. They bore an excellent English name, and I was told that the father was a member of a distinguished British family, and an official in the I. C. S. When he returned to England, leaving them unprovided for, the Indian mother and her children went to live with her brother. They were ostracized by all the rest of her family. The children had grown up and married others of their kind, and bred more children. One of them had married an American negress from North Carolina, a typical black, kinky-haired negress, whose name was Riley! They would not send their children to the only school open to them, an Indian school, so they were all illiterate.

There were a dozen or fifteen of them living in a filthy two-room hovel, with puddles of sour milk, and dirty dishes, and dirty babies underfoot. A young man came forward—out of a job—no money coming in. But he met us with a certain debonair pluck. "I am sorry to have you see me here—this place is a slum," he said. Squatting in a corner, smiling up with tragic submissiveness was the old woman, who, as a fresh young girl, had attracted a white *sahib* and brought all this tragedy into the world.

The most unusual Anglo-Indian I met was a wealthy *zamindar* in the United Provinces. She lived in an elaborate brick house with a battlemented tower looking like a fortress. She was the landlord of fourteen adjacent villages which she inherited from her father. She

was a woman of forty-five, light-skinned, tall, aggressive, and known as a hard and relentless landlord. She has lived alone in this big house for years, administering the estate, going to England—'home' she calls it—nearly every summer.

The house was the typical home of a wealthy contractor in the Victorian era. There was a large billiard room with long empty benches on high platforms, and a series of parlors filled with heavy, upholstered furniture in covers of bright flowered chintz. She was a collector and had two hobbies, old brass and old china. The walls of a large room were covered with fine old plates of Spode and Wedgwood, Coalport and Crown Derby, bearing the crests of English and Indian regiments, and some china of the old John Company itself.

She had the abounding energy of her Anglo-Saxon blood, undiminished by her lifetime in the Indian climate. She painted in oils, modeled in clay, dabbled in silver and metals. She spent her mornings with her manager, going over petitions and accounts. She went into Delhi twice a week, transacted her business and poked around in the bazaars looking for old china and brass. She never read anything; she said she did not have time.

She had all the assurance of a *grande dame*—twitted me pleasantly about my American accent, and told a rather long story about receiving a letter from an American woman signed 'Cordially yours.' She thought it so odd that she wanted to reply 'lemon-squashedly yours.'

There were no other Anglo-Indians in her neighbor-

hood. She told of attending a ceremony in the neighboring town. She was the only woman present, the other guests were wealthy Indian *zamindars*. She spoke of her peasants with curling scorn as so many animals.

I never saw an Indian home with the shine and sparkle that betokens the indefatigable housekeeper. This house had it. The chintzes were freshly laundered. The brasses shone and sparkled. There was not a speck of dust to be seen on all her hundreds of bits of brass and china and other treasures, nor in the ghostly emptiness of the dark, silent billiard room. She evidently had the same passion for housekeeping that she had for administering her estates.

There was a bizarre fascination about the woman. Tall, thin, nervous, a great talker, she combined her father's will-to-live and delight in managing and mastery with her mother's adaptation to the climate. Perhaps her artistic bent came from her mother. There was nothing pitiful about her. She was having a gorgeous time living.

HINDU LIFE

The Largest Temples in the World

TENNESSEE'S famous Evolution trial dramatized a universal process. Like everything else, religions must submit to the process of evolution. To-day, science has challenged certain religious sanctions. Hinduism, because it is so much older and more deeply entrenched than Western faiths, moves more slowly, and has been able to postpone making such adjustment.

India's bondage to priestcraft is a typically medieval characteristic. The Middle Ages marked for the Christian Church the height of its secular power. It was the medieval Church that led the flower of Western chivalry to death in crusades to save the Holy Land; it dominated the politics of Europe in alliances of Church and State; it built the most beautiful cathedrals that the world will ever know.

It is appropriate that to-day we should find the largest temples in the world in India, vastly larger than Saint Paul's in London or Saint Peter's in Rome. I saw three such temples covering acres of ground, each one a village in itself. They are all in southern India, which is significant. In the North, Hinduism has been diluted and tempered by alien invaders.

Lahore was my farthest north in India. It lies in the northwestern corner, in the direction of the Khyber Pass. The streets of Lahore are narrow with over-

hanging balconies of carved *shisham* wood. Long gay strips of cloth, dripping dye, flutter from the balconies like battle flags. Fluted columns and carved doorways of time-stained wood, like weather-beaten teak give the city a look of immemorial age.

Beyond the foothills of the Himalayas, across the path which all armies invading India must follow, lies Lahore. To-day, the city stands well above the level of the surrounding country on ground that is the dust and powder of a long succession of cities. Each was patiently built upon ruins, each in turn wiped out by the fresh fury of Timurs and Baburs, bursting through the Khyber Pass, crazed with dreams of riches waiting to be plundered. Archeologists, digging down, find the ruins of sixteen cities which, one after the other, have stood upon this site.

It is 1,800 miles from Lahore to the southern tip of the continent. This is several hundred miles further than from Quebec to Key West. Northern India has taken the brunt of centuries of invasion, not only in pillage and destruction, but in the necessity to adapt herself to victorious invaders. To-day, the inhabitants of the three northwestern frontier provinces are almost exclusively followers of Mohammed, an alien religion.

Southern India has been protected from change both by distance and climate. Tropical languor stays the hand of savage Northerners. The Hindu religion has flourished and bloomed in southern India like the riotous parasitic orchids and pitcher plants in a steaming tropical jungle.

Trichinopoly, in southern India, lies ten degrees above the equator, and has a population of 120,000. Here is the largest temple in the world, dedicated to the god Vishnu. Imagine a tabernacle a half mile square, or reaching from Twenty-third to Thirty-fourth streets, and from Third to Seventh avenues in New York City. Then imagine a second such temple, beginning at Forty-second and reaching north to Fifty-second street. For the followers of Shiva, not to be outdone, have built, half a mile away, another temple almost as large.

The temple to Vishnu at Sri Rangam is surrounded by seven high walls. Receding waves of the temple's complex life beat against them. Lining the inner walls are the palaces of the five temple *Rajahs,* or Managers, who live with more magnificence than the *rajahs* of many Indian states. Against the next walls lean the homes of the hundreds of Brahman priests serving the temple. Further out stand the famous temple cars. Skirting the outer temple walls are the bazaars, hundreds of tiny shops where they sell jewels, clothing, food, books, offerings to the gods; grotesque wooden and china images, daubed with crude red and blue paint; chromos of strange creatures with myriad arms and legs like spiders; brass gods, new and shiny, stamped out by thousands in a factory. The ultimate anachronism is making gods by machinery!

I met a procession one morning in the narrow sun-baked street. The god Shiva was on his way to visit another temple. The leading elephant stopped at every

fruit stall for offerings of bananas which he smoothly swallowed in bunches of a dozen at a time. Shopkeepers, housewives, children, made offerings to the priests. The elephant god, Ganesh, is the especially beloved god of Luck. He has an elephant's head and trunk on a pot-bellied human body. As the favorite son of god Shiva, Ganesh led the way, sitting high above the crowd on the shoulders of priests in a bamboo *palanquin,* which fluttered with turkey-red cambric ruffles, ball fringes and garlands of bright pink roses and orange marigold. The god Shiva followed in a more elaborate *palanquin* with more priests and ruffles. Boys carried poles tipped off with bright pink and blue sofa pillows edged with dirty white ruffles. The procession was barbarically crude and tawdry. It seemed rather the expression of a primitive people than of an old culture.

The musicians stopped beside me in the narrow street. Two men were blowing on pipes, another beat a drum. One pipe played a monotonous contralto accompaniment. The other piper, a tall handsome man, carried the air. He held his pipe with one hand, and beat time with the other for the drummer who watched and swayed as though he were hypnotized. The tall man piped away with a fine hauteur, never altering the tempo of his beating hand. The drummer was working himself into a frenzy, his long black hair, coiled on his neck, fell down over his shoulders, shadowing his face. His dark body was pouring sweat. His face and mouth jerked into leering contortions with every drum beat. The handsome piper watched him calmly, tootling the

air and beating time with the dispassionate remoteness of Fate itself.

The decoration of the Southern temples suggests the suffocating verdure of tropical jungles. There are forests of pillars and statues, heavily carved and painted; long creeper-like elephants' trunks, monkeys' tails, sacred cobras, fantastically exaggerated, repeated thousands of times in a single courtyard; goddesses with wasp waists, voluptuous hips, breasts as round as baseballs. Hindus carve in deep relief and chase and fret the entire surface of doors, gates, columns, ceilings, walls, inside and out, until they look like repoussé work. Our revolt against the ornateness of the late Victorian era makes the elaboration and miscroscopic detail of the Hindu temple seem overwhelming. I was dazed by it and fatigued.

The carving illustrates pious legends taken from the Hindu classics and scriptures. These are as extravagant as the art itself. In the Mahabharata, the horses, men, elephants of opposing armies, are numbered in millions. Space is measured in millions of miles, time in millions of years. A *rani* gives birth to 100 sons. One god has 16,000 wives and is the father of 180,000 sons. A Prince weds 10,000 virgins in a single night.

On some of the pillars and temple cars are so-called obscene carvings which have been severely criticized. They seemed to me less objectionable than the green scum on the temple tanks, and the look of tragic hopelessness in many women's eyes. It is necessary to recognize the simple naturalness of the Hindu toward

the facts of sex. Living in the teeming tropics, he has the same matter-of-fact attitude toward desire and procreation that we have for hunger and food. In the same spirit, he worships the *lingam,* a crude phallic symbol, universal all over India. He is entirely unself-conscious about it and I believe, in most cases, unconscious of its symbolism. To him it merely represents the god Shiva who typifies the power of Nature, at once Creator and Destroyer. The *lingam* is a favorite object of worship in wayside and household shrines. It is a short column set in a bowl, the latter symbolizing the female. Both symbols are utterly unrealistic. A *nandi,* or kneeling bull, Shiva's special steed, usually kneels near by. In one of Shiva's temples in Tanjore, southern India, an iron bull, several times life size, is the principal object in the main courtyard. It drips with *ghee* (melted butter) poured on by worshipers, and glistens as though hot chocolate sauce had been poured over it. The main temple is a vast empty room. In the center stands a single image, a gigantic *lingam* fifteen feet high. The temple courtyard covers twenty-five acres and is walled in by a covered arcade. Perhaps ten feet apart, round two sides of this arcade, are black stone *lingams.* They vary in size, but probably average two feet high and ten inches across. All are the same plain stone column, dripping with *ghee,* garlanded with jasmine, veiled with the smoke of incense. A frieze of bulls kneel on top of the wall above the *lingams.* The symbolism of the bulls as of the *lingam* is the same—virility.

The *lingam* is so conventionalized, and its worship so natural, that it is difficult to imagine how any one can object to it. One might as well object to many unrecognized symbols of the West, which are survivals of primitive days.

The Tank of the Golden Lily

THE ancient city of Madura in the tip end of southern India is mentioned in some of the earliest documents of the Western world. Pliny, 75 A.D., and Ptolemy, seventy-five years later, refer to the kingdom of Pandya, and its capital Madura. Marco Polo wrote of the fabulous pearls and wealth of the Pandyan King.

Through the centuries, new dynasties have risen, had their day and disappeared. The city of Madura, rich and somnolent under the tropical sun, has adjusted herself with fascinating ease to each succeeding régime. It made me wonder whether the human animal is ready for the benefits of peace when I saw what it has produced in southern India. Her monuments to these centuries of comparative tranquillity are colossal temples and slavery to superstition and the tyranny of the past.

A station bungalow run by the railroad offers the only hotel accommodations in Madura. I wired ahead for a reservation. When I arrived at nine in the evening, I found that a party of ten from Ceylon had that noon taken every room. A guide, eager to be of service, suggested that I arrange with the station master to spend the night in a sidetracked sleeping car. I did so. Then my guide insisted that I must see the Golden Lily Tank by moonlight. I had been seeing things all day,

but he bore me off, protesting, folded double in a low-bridged ox-cart.

A rectangle of broad stone steps led down to the Tank of the Golden Lily. Arched corridors surrounded the Lily Tank with mystery. Tapers flickered like fireflies. Hundreds of worshipers, barefooted, passed like shadow shapes against the glow of a great door, studded with oil tapers in tiny brass cups. White moonlight shone down through the open roof, over the shiny wetness of stone steps, against velvet black shadows. Men and women bathing in the glamorous light, moved gently, as though under an incantation. The minor cadences of Hindu music wove themselves into the spell.

The music came nearer, and I followed a procession bearing god Shiva and his wife from one shrine to another. The doll figures of the gods, decked in fine white mull and red and yellow flower wreaths, were borne in tinseled *palanquins*. Temple elephants in gold and crimson led the way. Hundreds of worshipers lined their path. Oil torches made streaks of yellow in the vast spaces, and threw dancing lights upon yearning faces. Swarms of bats circled overhead, swooping down close to our heads. Bulls sauntered up and turned away with the blasé indifference of sacred kine. We passed half a hundred men and women, old and young, walking round and round a shrine to one of the planets. Circling the shrine nine times, with appropriate prayers, promises success in any venture. Night and day, suppliants join the line, and drop away. Their faces are

a *comédie humaine;* pompous men of position, slim young wives, debonair young men in snowy white linen, self-conscious and important.

This was not a festival, but an ordinary night. The Hindus have no Sabbath. Except as the people form a background for glittering processions of priests and gods through the temples, there is little congregational worship. A Hindu temple is a crossroads where men and women, rich and poor, pass, intent upon individual errands. The temple at Madura covers twenty-five acres. It was thronged with worshipers. Many of them were under thirty. Hundreds of young men passed me to do *puja,* (say prayers) before keeping their evening engagements. They stopped in front of a box of sacred ashes of cow dung to daub gray ash across their foreheads; they bought wreaths of jasmine and marigold to lay before their god.

That moonlight night in Madura, Hinduism was at its best. The tawdriness and filth were hidden. Against the shadows of the night, the pageantry of the temple life was thrillingly beautiful. I hesitated to return next morning. I knew that the glamour of the night would be gone, and it was. The Tank of the Golden Lily, in the moonlight, a gleaming, mysterious pool, was a repulsive mass of green slime. I asked my guide why the water looked so—I tactfully chose the word—queer. He naïvely replied, "Because so many people have washed in it."

The thronging life of the Madura temple on that first moonlit evening fascinated me. It was difficult to

come away. I did not get back to the railroad station until after eleven. The station bungalow with its luxurious party of ten from Ceylon was hidden in darkness. Dark too was the station master's office. He had gone home and taken all the keys with him. The windows and doors of my sidetracked sleeping car were all locked. It seemed impenetrable.

"Any one around a station knows how to open those windows from the outside," the guide assured me, and was as good as his word. I could not decide whether I was more glad to have him break open the car for me, or less glad to see how easy it would be for others to break in after him, especially as I had $100 in *rupees* in my money belt. After my recent experience in Portuguese India, I did not propose to run out of money again!

The locked car door would not open from the inside, so a coolie brought a chair, and I climbed into my private car through the window. The guide gave me a final whispered caution:

"The *Memsahib* should push her luggage under the berth she sleeps on. There's plenty of thieves hanging around, and anything left near a window most likely won't be there in the morning." I wanted to ask him what about myself, but decided that he could not help me further.

Left alone, I looked about me. At the moment, I did wish I had a good trusty servant to curl up in the servant's compartment. But it was too late now. It was a reeking hot night. I was only ten degrees above the

equator. If I left all the windows closed, even with the electric fan going, I should stifle. Having seen the ease with which the guide, presumably an honest man, opened the windows for me, it seemed futile to inconvenience myself by stifling. I opened all the windows and closed the shutters. I spread out two sheets, undressed, and poked my belongings under the berth.

As I lay down I thought to myself that this was a mean sort of a fix, and that I might not sleep very well. The next thing I knew, my eyes opened and it was broad daylight. With trains roaring through the yard every two hours all night, and all the shouting bedlam of a railroad station, I had slept right through until nearly seven o'clock. Half afraid to find out, I reached down and felt under the berth—yes, there was my suitcase, my typewriter and my bedding-roll. My dress lay across the foot of the berth. The rest of my clothes I had taken under the sheet with me, so that I should at least be sure to have them.

That night was an excellent experience. After that I never felt afraid. I realized that there is a slight chance of some one's running amok everywhere, but less chance in India than in—say, Chicago. I was surprised and pleased by my facility in sleeping. It was partly the climate. The heat is so enervating that I was always ready for a nap. And then, traveling without a bearer does make demands. I recommend it to any one suffering from insomnia.

Ganga Mai

Of her countless sacred temples and tanks and trees, the holiest spot of all is in northern India, Benares on the Ganga Mai—the banks of sacred Mother Ganges.

Every year a million pilgrims visit Benares to do *puja* in the sacred river. Many of them are from southern India, a thousand miles away. *Rajahs* arrive in special trains, in silent liveried limousines. Second- and third-class carriages are always crowded with pilgrims. The dusty white roads are congested with them.

The peasant plans and saves all his life to make this pilgrimage. Frequently it is not until near the end that he is able to arrange it. He bids his family and friends good-by and sets out, his face turned eagerly toward Benares. In one hand he carries a *lota*. On the opposite shoulder rests his *lathi* and, hanging from it, a small bundle, some grain tied up in a square of cloth, his food for the journey. When it is gone, he will beg his way. If he is old, he settles down to wait for death in Benares; he believes that any one who dies within a certain mystic radius, and whose ashes are scattered on the bosom of Mother Ganges, is sure of attaining Paradise.

Boatmen rowed me along the crescent shore of the sacred river. I drew my tweed coat closer and shivered. There is nothing tropical about the dawn of a January morning in Benares. Behind me the sun rose, and its

glow suffused the faces of hundreds of pilgrims on the gray stone *ghats* that line the shore; widows with sagging breasts and a bristle of white hair over their shaven heads; young girl widows; puny children. An old man and woman, their features chiseled to delicate fragility by the years, stood shivering, waist deep in the water. They trembled with the cold, but their faces were beautiful, facing the sunrise.

Hundreds of the men were in their prime. I saw more men of fine physique here than in all the rest of India put together. Many of them wore the triple thread of the Brahman, and represented the aristocracy of the land. Stripped to a loin cloth, with fine stalwart bodies in tones of fawn and sepia and ivory, they bordered the river bank like a Greek frieze of athletes and gladiators. They stood and squatted, ducking their heads under water, pausing to say prayers, brushing their teeth with twigs, cupping the water in their hands and drinking it. Men and women squatted on the lowest steps, washing their *dhotis* and *saris*.

Pilgrims filled brass jars with the sacred water. Notaries on the *ghats* seal and stamp the jars, and they are carried away to rouse wonder and reverence in remote villages. Behind the bathers rose the *ghats*, broad, low stone steps, sloping up the river bank, their edges worn slippery by the naked feet of centuries of pilgrims. Priests and *sadhus* squat under weather-stained umbrellas or shelters of yellow matting. Pilgrims leave their few things with a priest. Coming back, they squat before him. The priest, with his box

of oils, spread out like an artist's, makes the proper caste mark on the pilgrim's forehead. His fee is a handful of grain, or a *pice* (one-half of a cent).

A Brahman dandy, returning from *puja*, stretches himself languidly on the *ghats*. A troop of attendants swarm about him, a barber, a masseur, a manicure, a chiropodist. He is patted and oiled and perfumed. His turban and *dhoti* are draped with fastidious care. He is turned out as exquisite as any Beau Brummell.

My boat drifted slowly down river with the tide. On an isolated pedestal squatted a white-haired Indian, a shawl thrown round him, like a toga. His eyes were closed, but his stern old face reflected profound contentment. Close by stood a small grandson in a long red coat and cap, holding Grandfather's gold-headed cane solemnly before him. Very still the little boy stood, looking into the East. It was an hour later when the rowers slowly brought me back. The two figures were still there, motionless. The old man, his life behind him, was supremely content in this little male heir who should say prayers for his soul after he had passed on, and so insure his future welfare. Beside him stood the little boy, holding the gold-headed cane, and gazing into the East, lost perhaps in dreams of the future.

Back of the *ghats* is a network of temples. For centuries, wealthy Hindus coming to bathe away their sins have built temples here. Astrological computations determined where they should be built. Benares is perhaps the most blind-alley, haphazard city in the world.

Sanitary conditions are archaic. The city has an especially irresponsible population. Hundreds of old people drift along precariously waiting for death. Thousands of beggars, lepers, cripples exploit the liberality of the pious. Countless pilgrims are here to-day and gone to-morrow.

Back into the city stretch the bazaars where craftsmen catch the *rupees* of the tourist trade. Beyond lie the close-packed homes of the weavers. For centuries the brocades and shimmering gossamer scarves of their looms have been carried all over the world for the adornment of queens and brides and courtesans.

Hundreds of foreign tourists visit Benares every winter. Some of them are disgusted by the stench in the narrow alleys, lined with beggars, cripples, sacred bulls, swarming monkeys. They are horrified by the filth of the river, and the sewage seeping down between the walls of this over-crowded, age-old city, at the very feet of pilgrims bathing in and drinking the water.

Old age is always conservative and Benares is very old. In 600 B.C., it was a famous holy city, crowded with pilgrims and *sannyasis*, sacred bulls and monkeys, just as it is to-day. An accumulated fervor of centuries of ablutions and *pujas* hovers over the gray *ghats* of Benares, and transfigures the eager faces of pilgrims looking toward the sunrise.

Mela Day in Brindaban

SMALL boys everywhere like Circus Day in America! It was *Mela* Day in Brindaban. Lines of bullock carts blurred in a haze of dust jogged into the little town. The bullocks had neat ankles, a quaint hump between their shoulders, gilded horns, and a string of bright blue china beads around their necks. The springless two-wheeled *ekkas* (carts) were painted green and yellow and red, with sprigs of flowers and closely drawn curtains behind which women and children sweltered.

I saw my first camel carts, fascinating archaic structures loosely jointed, two stories high, like an exaggerated wooden bird cage, thatched with bamboo, on clumsy wooden wheels. The camel picked his way deliberately, neck arched in a high disdainful curve more than compensating for the ugly callouses on his threadbare coat. The two stories of the bird cages were filled with women and children. In bright purple and crimson and emerald, peering out between the wooden rungs of their cages, they looked like a flock of parrots and macaws.

By mid-morning the streets were choked with people, twenty men for every woman. Most of the women were from the lower castes and outcastes. I climbed on a pile of loose lumber to take some pictures. Several

women were squatting there. Each held a baby to her breast and, with her other hand, clutched the edges of her *sari* in front of her face, leaving a slit through which she could peek out. They knew no English, but smiled back with quick friendliness as I admired their babies. We watched the merry-go-round. Small boys capered on toy elephants and camels. Two men clad in turban and loin cloth, their bodies glistening with perspiration, turned iron handles to keep the wheels going round. There was a gentle tootling of pipes, and the rhythm of drums muffled by distance.

More small boys filled a Ferris wheel of four long baskets. A man pushed the baskets up on one side, and another man pulled them down. It was always the boys who were having fun. The little girls stayed close to their mothers, clutching at their *saris*, or carrying brothers astride their hips.

A neighboring *rajah* and his courtiers surveyed the scene from an elephant's broad back. It moved imperturbably, slowly raising and lowering its feet with regal indifference as to whether there would be an empty space in the crowded street when those huge feet came down. Lesser dignitaries rode on camels. But camels lack the prestige of elephants. They toil in caravans as beasts of burden. Only unsophisticated Westerners are charmed by the supercilious, effortless ease of the passing camel.

Vendors lined the edges of the streets. Their stands made a gay fringe of color, with piles of oranges, bananas, glistening green *betel* leaves, honey-colored

sweets, bottles of poisonously bright green and red soda water.

Brindaban, where the *mela* was held, is one of India's seven most holy cities. With a population of less than 50,000, it has 6,000 temples and public shrines, exclusive of the private altars in orthodox homes. The city is always thronged with pilgrims, and it is the popularity of the god Krishna which brings them. Here he spent his childhood and youth. Modern scholars believe that Krishna may have been a real person who lived about 700 B.C. The similarity in the names of Krishna and Christ is paralleled in the stories of their birth and early life.

Krishna was the incarnation in human form of the god Vishnu who, "being moved to relieve the earth of her lord, descended into the womb of Devaki, and was born as her son." (*Vishnu Purana*, IV, 15.) He chose a humble home, and became, like his foster father, a cowherd. Indian mothers cherish little images of the baby Krishna. The symbolism of the Omnipotent Godhead concealed in the body of a helpless, human child has something of the same universal appeal as the Cinderella story. Shrines showing the infant Krishna in the cowherd's hut are almost as popular in Indian homes as the *bambino* Jesus and his manger in Italy. Many of Krishna's names are the same as Christ's. He is known as the Holy Child, born in humility amidst cowherds by the Jumna; the Gentle Shepherd of the people; the Blessed Lord, tender Lover and Savior of the human soul. A romantic tendency finds expression

in such terms as Heavenly Bridegroom, Divine Spouse.

The *Bhagavad Gita* is a chapter of the Hindu scriptures which contains the essence of their teachings, corresponding to our Sermon on the Mount. It records a conversation between Krishna and Arjuna and identifies Krishna with the most lofty concepts of their religion. The *Gita* is the book of the intellectuals and mystics. The masses identify themselves with a more fantastic Krishna. They love him as the rollicking young cowherd, playing his flute as he danced down the banks of the Jumna, capturing the hearts of all the milkmaids. He helped them milk their cows, stole their clothes when they went in bathing, seduced them wholesale. For Krishna was no ascetic. He was a lusty young roisterer who had 16,000 wives and 180,000 sons. Here on the banks of the Jumna he passed his boyhood and youth. In these meadows, he began his amorous adventures. It was this part of his life which delights the masses, and they sing lustily, "Oh, thou that playest on the flute, standing by the water-*ghats* on the road to Brindaban."

On this annual *mela* day, they brought out the great temple car, and carried god Krishna in state to a neighboring garden. In the afternoon they carried him back. The front of the temple wall, sealed with masonry all the year, was opened for this day. From a hangar-like cave in the wall several hundred Brahmans advanced pulling a thick rope. Temple elephants in crimson and gold trappings, prancing riderless horses, proud, softly stepping camels, cleared the way, followed by the

ONE OF THE SEVEN TEMPLE GATEWAYS IN MADURA SHOWING THE DETAILED CARVING SO CHARACTERISTIC OF HINDU ART

A VIEW INSIDE THE WALLS OF THE LARGEST TEMPLE IN THE WORLD, SRI RANGAM IN TRICHINOPOLY, SOUTHERN INDIA

SANTAL BOYS, ABORIGINES OF NORTHERN INDIA, HEAVILY DRESSED FOR A COOL EARLY MORNING IN FEBRUARY

temple hierarchy under a blazing canopy of crimson velvet and gold.

Appreciating the value of mystery, the priests threw a black veil over god Krishna. He loomed a dark, masked figure, from an inmost shrine which rested high upon a bower of palm branches, piles of fruit, festoons of golden marigold. Above him, upcurving roofs tapered pagoda-like to a pinnacle of a golden vase under a golden umbrella. The car stopped frequently. Worshipers pushed through the throng to hand up offerings of oranges, sweet cakes, money, to supercilious young Brahman priests.

A whirlpool of color, the massed turbans of the crowd surged round this Behemoth. Outlining the wide street, flags and banners and palms fluttered. The roofs of the low plaster houses made a border of women's figures in brilliant *saris*, flashing in the sun. Priests shouted. Small boys whooped shrilly. With shining eyes, men chanted Hindu songs to Krishna:

> "Call on the Lord, Call on the Lord,
> Call on the Lord, little brother!
> Than this name of the Lord, for mortal man
> There is no other way."

Fire Worshipers

If it is good to make the pilgrimage to Benares, it is even better to visit all of India's seven holy cities. Muttra, on the banks of the sacred river Jumna in northern India, is ages old and holy. Unlike Benares, the convenience of tourists is not considered. Muttra has its own sequestered, mystical charm. An Indian in a loin cloth, brown and statuesque against the sky, poled us through the still water. An Indian pilgrim, his wife and small son shared the boat with me. He told me of his family and his work—he had a shop in a small town. The wife kept her face covered, and would not answer when I tried to draw her into conversation. The Indian laughed. "She is shy," he commented.

Before me lay a strip of still blue water against a line of yellow sand and the lush green of bamboo. Beyond flamed the golden brilliance of the sunset sky. The nearer shore lay, a long straight line of gray stone *ghats*, tinged with the rose and gold of the setting sun. Brick ruins of an old red Fort broke the low skyline of flat-roofed rest houses, built by pious *rajahs*. A minaret and red sandstone cupolas pierced the sky. Far down the shore a blaze flared, the burning corpse of some Hindu privileged to die in holy Muttra.

As twilight fell, the boatman brought us opposite the

Visran Ghat. On the steps, a dozen sacred bulls munched the offerings of pilgrims. They looked quaintly disjointed with forefeet on one step and hind feet on another, some pointed up, some down. The twenty-five feet of water between the boat and the *ghats* was black with enormous turtles, also sacred. Women and children squatted on the lower steps feeding them. Leaping from cornice to window to tree, hundreds of monkeys chattered and jumped down to snatch bits of food. White-headed vultures perched in an austere row on a roof.

At one end of the *ghats*, beyond the turtles, women squatted, mumbled prayers and launched tiny wooden boats, with a burning wick soaked in *ghee*. Each light represented some agonized desire; the prayer of a barren woman for a son, of a mother for her sick child, of a deserted woman for her husband's return. The longer the light burns, and the farther into the stream the little craft sails, the better the omen. For more than an hour in the twilight, women launched their tiny argosies of hope. Sometimes twenty or thirty lights flickered on the bosom of the sacred stream.

Darkness fell. Bells chimed, loud and discordant. Framed in a white marble colonnade, priests pulled back a white curtain. High above the crowd which thronged the steps stood a young priest, holding a candelabrum of many tiers of lights. Back and forth he waved it, high over our heads, like a beacon. The gleam of oil tapers flared over the dark waters and danced on the backs of turtles. It made grotesque shapes of the sacred

bulls straddling the steps, and sifted a magical chiaroscuro over the upturned faces of the worshipers.

Solemnly the priest stooped and placed the flaming pyramid on the step below him. The people crowded close, reaching their hands into the sacred fire, carrying it to their faces, cleansing themselves of sin in the purifying flame. These people were not the fire worshiping Parsis, but Hindus. They told me that it was the only place in India where Hindus observe the ancient rite of fire worship.

The boatman poled us silently down the dark river to the public *ghats,* and the landing stage. Looking back, the bank where the fire worshipers had launched their boats and bathed in fire was blotted out in the sooty blackness of the tropic night. The stars hung low and brilliant, almost as near as the young priest's tapers. Down the shore, the light of the burning corpse made a glowing red spot in the darkness.

Traveling Third-class

ALLAHABAD is a very holy city, and it also is in northern India. The power of Hinduism flourishes in southern India, but its most sacred shrines are in the North. Allahabad stands on a triangle of land where India's two most sacred rivers meet, the Ganges and the Jumna.

Every year Allahabad holds a *mela*, or fair, attended by *lacs* of pilgrims (*lac* is a hundred thousand). Every twelfth year there is a *mahamela* (great *mela*) when the crowds reach so far over a million that they are past counting. Pilgrims are always trampled to death and drowned in the struggle to bathe in the sacred waters, where they meet.

It was not a *mahamela* that I attended, but an eclipse of the sun gave the day special importance. I met a *sadhu* (begging priest) in Benares on his way to the *mela*, and he agreed to accompany me. The trip from Benares to Allahabad is about a half day's run. Leaving the junction of Moghal Serai, we had our choice of seats in a train being made up. The *sadhu* wanted to go third-class, and found an empty carriage. There were long bench-like seats down the sides of the carriage, not upholstered, and a third bench in the middle. We sat in opposite corners, and had the place to ourselves for several hours. The police estimated that half a million pilgrims attended the *mela*. The train was packed with

people; but such was the respect for a white *memsahib* and an Indian *sadhu* that they did not attempt to enter our carriage.

Conversation lagged. I opened my typewriter. The *sadhu* stretched himself out on his bench, threw the end of his yellow robe over his face, and went to sleep. We stopped at little way stations, lighted only by a camp fire or a torch. At each stop, the crowd came rushing up like a shadowy white avalanche. Seeing the *sadhu* and myself, they fell back into the darkness. From front and rear came an uproar of shouts and groans as they tried to wedge themselves into the third-class carriages. There was so much confusion that the train was three hours late, and we reached Allahabad at midnight instead of at nine o'clock. The last two hours we had company.

The carriage door opened and a big, intelligent-looking Indian in a purple turban pushed his wife in, with her baby. She was followed by two small children and two servants carrying large packs. The family took the middle bench, the servants squatted on the floor. Instantly the mob burst in at the door. I put my typewriter quickly away. Two unkempt-looking Indians, evidently peasants, sat down beside me—at a respectful distance, there being only three of us on a seat that would easily hold four. The *sadhu* continued to occupy the entire opposite bench. No one ventured to disturb him. When the train started, he peremptorily told the peasant lads to get up. They meekly did so, and he sat down beside me.

As the train slowed up for the next station, Purple Turban told his servants to keep the door closed. By utmost effort they managed it. One of the windows on the platform side was open. A ruffian-looking person calmly shoved a large brass water jug and bundle through the window and climbed in over people's heads. For a minute it looked as though there might be complications. The intruder was so much larger than any one else that he discouraged opposition. Just then along came another stranger, trying to get in. A red bundle hung from a stick over his shoulder, and he carried a large bunch of reeds, of the sort Indians use for tooth brushes. He was a peddler going to the *mela.* One of the servants at the window struggled to keep him out. Quietly, the ruffian—who evidently was not a ruffian, but an altruist—whisked the remaining servant away like a bit of straw, and held the door open for the new man, followed by a dozen others. When they decided that there were enough, all combined to hold doors and windows against further intrusion.

These were agricultural villages and most of the men were *ryots*—peasants. They wore homespun scarves or dingy unbleached blankets, wrapped round them, and thrown over their shoulders, sometimes drawn over their heads. They surged up out of the warm black night, framed for me by the doorway and windows, lighted by fitful torches, struggling and shouting and pushing. While the excitement was at its height, the wheels crunched, gently the train began to move, and softly, magically, we shook off the clamor

and struggle, and there was only the velvet blackness of the night—until the next station, when it would happen all over again. Each time, the crowd surged up with the same costumes, the same gestures, the same harsh noises, until they seemed like actors rehearsing a mob scene over and over again.

Through it all, the *sadhu* and I sat undisturbed, two of us on a bench for four people.

Swallowing Camels

With a falsetto toot of its horn, the taxi, which was really a metered Buick touring car, turned off the Chowringhee, and through the cobweb of streets leading to the New Market in the heart of Calcutta. Curs, beggars, babies, slid out of our path with fractions of a second to spare, while the black-bearded Sikh chauffeur 'stepped on the gas' with magnificent unconcern, shoulders back, the dangling end of his purple turban flying straight behind him.

Beggars and cripples swarmed up to open the door for the *memsahib,* and to follow me with whining cries and outstretched bowls. In big letters across the front of the building, I read its name. The Sir Stuart Hogg Market. It is more euphoniously known as the New Market. White *memsahibs,* Eurasian boarding-house keepers in all shades of tan, thin and pallid, fat and slovenly, chattering groups of low caste women, peering between folds of their bright *saris,* crowded the aisles. It brought back memories of World's Fairs, a vista of jewels, silks, hand-blocked prints, brass, bronze, ivories. To the right were booths of flowers and food.

In an arched doorway leading into the food stalls had sat an old begging holy man. For more than ten years he lived in that doorway, through monsoons and

hot and cold weathers. He wore the saffron robe and turban of the ascetic. His staff lay beside him. A rosary was twined in his fingers. These were his only possessions.

Servants in white turbans and long white coats, buying the day's supplies for the English colony, passed through the doorway and sometimes threw him grains of rice or a few herbs. One early morning while I was in Calcutta, they found the old man sitting bowed in his accustomed place—dead. There was a clamor that the traditional custom be followed of burying this holy man on the spot where he had lived and begged and died.

Merchants in neighboring booths objected because it involved blocking up the doorway. They were overruled, and the holy man was duly buried in the heart of a city of over a million inhabitants. The late C. R. Das was Mayor of the city at the time. I asked him why they heeded such superstition. He smiled gently, and said he saved his energy for more important issues.

The dénouement shows an insidious Western influence. The financial interests opposed to blocking up the door began a quiet investigation of the dead man. A committee was appointed by the city to look into the matter. They announced that the dead man was neither a Hindu *sadhu* nor a Muslim *fakir*, but a Christian convert, that he was convicted in a stabbing case, served his time in the Andaman penal colony and was released before he became a begging 'holy man.' Even after this report, the emotional clamor continued, but was

overruled, the grave was moved, and the doorway was finally opened to the public.

The cumulative effect of such stories as this made me appreciate the centuries of difference in the motives and incentives which move us, and those which appeal to an Indian crowd.

Travelers in India have vivid memories of the crippled and diseased beggars lining the approaches to famous temples. Children pitifully maimed, old skeletons, male and female, exhibited their hideous masses of corruption until I grew as callous as a medical student. They waved stumps of arms and legs. Mothers held out comatose babies covered with sores. Squatting by the roadside with a begging bowl, swaying and chanting, they leered up with what was left of faces eaten away by leprosy, knees and elbows as angular as a skeleton's. They were everywhere, but they gathered in thousands in the holy cities, and around the famous temples.

I used to agree with my guide before we set out on a day's sight-seeing, how much to give these people. He would get some *rupees* changed into several hundred copper *pice* and—no doubt letting much of it stick to his fingers—he made it last the day. When a beggar picked me out as a victim, and led a dozen others in pursuit, all moaning and whining, I learned to point my finger at my guide and shrug my shoulders. They would scuttle back to their places to wait for some one else.

Except in famines, there is no provision for poor

relief. The joint-family system is supposed to absorb all the destitute family connections. The last census, however, showed 857,537 beggars and vagrants. These do not include the begging priests. Committees have been appointed in the larger cities to study Western forms of organized poor relief, and they contemplate institutions for the infirm, aged, adult blind, and a compulsory colony for able-bodied men.

They cannot go far in their study of beggars before they meet the baffling problem of the religious mendicant. Hindu, Muslim and Buddhist feel profound reverence for the ascetic. Any Hindu can become a *sannyasi*,—the word means renouncer. If he is tired of life, if he has made a botch of it, all he has to do is to give up his family, all material possessions and ambitions, put on a yellow robe and wander at will.

I saw *sannyasis* and *fakirs* everywhere, at conventions, in the bazaars, plodding through the dust of the Grand Trunk Road. The more extreme type goes entirely naked or wears the minimum of a rag about his waist. He lets his hair grow long, winds rope through it to make it look more disheveled, and piles it on his head in a bushy tangled mop. He daubs his face and body with filth and ashes of cow dung, which give him a ghastly pallor. He is our modern Saint Simeon Stylites. He performs spectacular penances, holding an arm extended until it stiffens in that position, swinging over a hot fire, sitting on a bed of spikes. He does this for his salvation, and sometimes, no doubt,

he is sincere. Those I saw, sitting in naked rows at the big *melas*, impressed me as exhibitionists, pretending to ignore the gaping crowds but, in reality, very conscious of us, and getting intense satisfaction from being stared at. Their eyes have a glittering leer from the use of drugs.

It used to be not uncommon for a man, when he reached forty, to turn his affairs over to his sons and beg his way across India. Some returned home after visiting the holy cities. Others never returned. Malaria and the climate no doubt play their part in calling so many men to renounce all effort. Most of them make no pretense of serving as spiritual advisers. They are absorbed in saving their own souls. Yet India patiently continues to support them.

There are five million such men, many of them in what we consider the prime of life. They not only contribute nothing, but are a continuous drain upon their country. India's average income of $25 a year is about the minimum subsistence level. It seems probable that the cost of these holy men, averaging together the thin ones who really fast and the fat ones who obviously do not, would not be less than this amount. These parasites must cost not less than $124,000,000 a year.

England's 'Economic Drain' on India is a favorite charge of the Indian Nationalist. He estimates it at 250 to 375 million dollars a year. He includes the costs of British civil and military administration, interest on railway charges and public debt, and excess

of imports over exports. Many of these items would have to be paid in some form under any circumstances. I doubt whether, on any reasonable estimate, this drain would amount to as much as the drain of India's own medieval customs.

India's habit of hoarding gold is notorious. Little piles of *rupees* and *annas* buried in the ground by millions of peasants, and the golden bangles and anklets of the women, represent an 'economic drain' estimated to be equivalent to the interest return on an investment of five billion dollars. Economists estimated that in 1919 India held one-third of the entire world supply of silver. For the last five years, she has absorbed amounts representing 40 per cent of the world's annual production of gold and 30 per cent of the silver.

With an average income of seven to nine cents a day, this is an amazing capacity. In the West, corresponding wealth is used as capital to build factories and for other income-producing purposes. India, lingering in the Middle Ages, has scarcely heard of banks.

Women's disabilities also constitute an 'economic drain.' Child marriage and premature maternity result in a lowering of the physique of the children which is of incalculable cost. The seclusion of woman, preventing her working outside the home, deprives both family and community of her potential contribution.

Caste is another drain. It limits or prevents normal choice of occupation. At birth the Hindu inherits his family's occupation. He may not pick the work for which he has aptitude. Caste divides society into in-

numerable water-tight compartments, with enormous loss to society of individual initiative and ability.

Superstitious belief in astrology is another source of economic waste. The astrologer is only second in importance to the priest. In most of the events of life, marriage, building a house, setting out on a journey, a man must consult his astrologer for favorable omens, instead of being guided by practical considerations.

The economic cost of Hinduism in helping spread disease must be very great. The stagnant temple tanks, the great *melas* where several million people gather and contagion spreads, are the sort of menace protected by religious sanction.

The sacredness of all animal life in India has been carried to an extreme which makes it a costly hobby. Not only cows and bulls, but monkeys, snakes, peacocks, almost any animal, is sacred. Monks of the Jain sect wear a bit of cloth over their mouths lest in breathing they unconsciously swallow a gnat. They brush the ground before them as they walk to prevent crushing some creeping thing.

Next to the beggars, the most revolting sight in India is the thousands of starving pariah dogs in every city and village. There is no waste food, and the people are too poor to feed these animals, yet it would be sacrilege to kill them. Snooping around the stations, a dog gets a leg run over by a train. He learns to hobble around on three legs. I even saw them pulling themselves along on two legs.

The cow is singled out for extreme veneration.

When a devout Hindu is dying, it is the custom that his bare feet shall touch Mother Earth, his hand shall grasp the tail of Mother Cow. Every one interested in Indian agriculture agrees that the cattle situation is a national menace. India has more cattle than she can maintain, yet fewer than she needs for practical purposes.

The pious Hindu peasant keeps his superannuated cattle long after they have ceased to be of use, at the cost of underfeeding his active cattle. A favorite form of charity is to found a *goshala,* or home, for old cattle. Rarely well-organized or adequately endowed, they are often places for the animals slowly to starve. The best milch cows are shipped to the big cities. At the end of the season, when they go dry, they are sold to non-Hindu butchers rather than incur the trouble and expense of shipping them back to the country to be bred. This practice is stripping India of her best milch cows, reducing the milk supply, sending its price soaring beyond the reach of the mass of people.

Samuel Higginbottom, head of the Agricultural School at Allahabad, estimates that over 90 per cent of Indian cows give less than 600 pounds of milk a year. The average for New York State is 5,500 and for Denmark 6,300 pounds. It is estimated that there are only enough milch cattle to supply one-eighth of the population with a fair quantity of milk. Since 1913, the price of cows in Bombay has more than doubled, and the price of milk has risen from two and a half to six cents a pound. The scarcity and high

A.

DELIGHTFULLY CLEAN NATIVE SANTAL VILLAGES IN THE INTERIOR OF BENGAL

B.

THE EFFECTS OF CONTACT WITH CIVILIZATION SEEN IN A DILAPIDATED SETTLEMENT OF SANTALS WORKING IN THE COAL MINES OF ASANSOL

VILLAGE OF OUTCASTE AGRICULTURAL WORKERS

cost of milk is one of the causes of India's infant mortality, which is probably the highest in the world.

The sacred bull is another source of waste. It is the custom to buy a bull calf and present him to the temple, as we might erect a plaque or memorial window. He then becomes a sacred bull. Often, the thrifty buyer selects a cheap calf, small or even deformed. This does not matter. The priests have him curried and his horns painted, and he wanders at will to sire a large percentage of India's cattle. It is a survival of the Unfit.

Cruelty to animals in spite of the reverence and affection felt for them seems curiously inconsistent. Refusal to kill maimed and starving animals is indirectly and stupidly cruel. India's more direct brutalities are usually the result of economic pressure. Such are the practices of *tonga* drivers, who twist the tails of their bullocks out of joint and small dairymen who torture the cow in order to get the last drop of milk from her udder. These men are under the goad of a poverty of which the West has no experience.

Beyond the large grounds of a house I visited in Lucknow, the street was being paved. It was cut up in great chunks, with detour signs at each end. Day after day, carters beat and bludgeoned their bullocks with heavily loaded wagons over this almost impassable road. They told me that three bullocks had been beaten to death during the previous week. I saw one lying dead. Before dawn the shouting and screaming of the drivers and the sound of their whacking blows on the poor

animals began. The first morning, I jumped up and dressed. I was convinced that it was a Hindu-Muslim riot!

The cow was originally declared sacred, it is supposed, in order to safeguard the supply of milk in a land subject to famines and droughts. The result has been to make milk so scarce that babies are dying for want of it. Similarly, the Hindu defeats his purpose of kindness to animals by refusing to kill the maimed, diseased and starving among them. The sacred cow tabu is an example of what happens to reason in a conflict between reason and emotion. The Hindus, observing the letter and not the spirit of their traditions, strain at gnats and swallow camels.

A Cow Conference is one of the most popular reforms among old-fashioned orthodoxy. I attended one in Calcutta. Six thousand Hindus squatted on the ground. In contrast with other meetings, the audience were conspicuously dull and ignorant-looking. Their turbans and *dhotis* were soiled and dingy; their faces and bodies looked emaciated and defeated. A forest of bamboo poles rose above them supporting the tent. Famous leaders of the Nationalist movement sat on the speakers' dais, which was draped in dark purple-red bunting, and white jasmine. A *sadhu* with a fine intellectual face sat among the speakers, his orange turban and robe a splash of color in the twilight. Beside him an old priest with shaven head rose to speak. He was dressed all in black, a striking figure in a land where black is rarely worn.

Some men boosted up a large white calf, its neck wreathed in jasmine. It was almost as large as the priest, and made an awkward armful as he strained it to his breast, its long legs dangling down in front. The priest began to speak in a monotone, as though he were reciting scripture. A neighbor translated for me. He said not a word about the practical feeding and breeding of cattle. He made a rabid emotional appeal against the inhumanity of Muslims in sacrificing cows, of butchers in slaughtering them, and of all non-Hindus who eat beef.

He grew impassioned, writhing from side to side, his voice husky. He sobbed and the tears ran down his cheeks. Groans of anguish rose from all over the tent. I saw many faces streaked with tears. They were a weird group in the twilight, groaning and sobbing in response to the emotional goading of this lanky, black-clad figure, his eyes burning with fanatic fire, his voice husky with sobs, straining to hold the enormous white calf which looked around with placid, bovine eyes, perhaps wondering what it was all about.

The Three R's

India's national illiteracy of 92 per cent may well be classed as one of her costliest drains. Hindu classics like the Chinese constitute an involved and special culture of their own. It is natural that this culture should have little relation to the problems of a machine civilization: it was created to meet the needs of another age.

Individual Indians are endeavoring to combine the best elements of their own culture with that of the West. More than half a million students attend various private institutions 'unrecognized' because they do not comply with Government requirements of schools eligible for grants in aid. Most of the missionary schools do comply, and receive help from the Government.

Some of the unrecognized schools have achieved international fame; the poet Rabindranath Tagore's school, *Santiniketan;* Gandhi's *ashram* at Ahmedabad; the *Gurukula* near Hardwar. These schools maintain Indian traditions of asceticism and austere living and of reverence for the *guru,* or teacher. Oriental respect for learning which far overshadows that for money and material success gives the *guru* a privileged position. He commands a reverence and affection from his pupils for which there is scarcely any parallel in the West. The Hindu theory of education has beautiful

and inspiring phases which complement the scientific literalness and accuracy of the West.

In spite of the seclusion of Indian women, Tagore's school is coeducational, and I think this defiance of tradition is characteristic of the spirit of experimentalism and tolerance of the school itself. There were about one hundred and twenty-five boys and thirty girls at *Santiniketan* when I visited there. The girls' hostel, or dormitory, was as simple and bare of furniture as the boys'. Standing on a balcony, I looked across a field to a circle of boys and girls playing a round game, running in and out, like children in this country.

For years the poet has quietly ignored *purdah* conventions. In presenting one of his plays a few years ago, a daughter-in-law of the poet, the wife of one of the head masters, and the poet himself took part. There was a ripple of comment. But the Tagore family have both wealth and position. Gossip does not disturb them.

The only other coeducational school that I saw was in Chandernagore, the French settlement near Calcutta. It is a combination of school, coöperative industrial enterprise and esoteric religious colony. It is about the same size as Tagore's school and most of the pupils are between fifteen and twenty-five. The *guru*, or head of the school, is Motilal Roy, a powerful-looking, forceful man, who preaches and practices the most rigid asceticism. He has built up a flourishing industrial school which he hopes will make his pupils self-supporting. He has a printing plant, makes furniture,

raises their food on a farm, spins and weaves their own home-spun *khadi*. The girls live in a house opening on an inner courtyard, and are in charge of the *guru's* wife.

The students rise at half-past five. At six, they stroll across the meadow for an hour of meditation in their temple on the banks of the Ganges. Although Motilal Roy is a Brahman, he does not use Hindu rituals, but an esoteric Universalism of his own. The girls walk to the temple together, unveiled, and there is occasional opportunity for a word or two with the men. All work at their various industries until noon. After a bath in the Ganges, they have breakfast and a nap. About three, life stirs again in the compound. They divide the day between work, study and meditation. Dinner is served at ten in the evening, on the roof of a house between the boys' hostel and the girls'.

Torches flame against the blackness of the tropic night. In white shirts and *dhotis* the long line of young men climb the ladder-like stairs and step out of the darkness into the flaring light. They squat on the yellow matting, each one taking his place behind a shining green plantain-leaf plate. Groups of three girls come slowly down the line with shining copper kettles of rice, *dal* and curry. Stooping before each Buddha-like figure, they ladle out mounds of white rice, and pungent curry and yellow *dal*. The flickering torches make lights and shadows on the young faces. The boys look up eagerly, or perhaps only hungrily. The girls smile back with shy reserve. The picture has a curious dream-

like charm. I had already come to take for granted the seclusion of Indian girls. This was a winsome and appealing contrast.

The school's final touch of strangeness lies in their ideas on marriage. It goes without saying that they disapprove of child marriage. Moreover, they do not believe in the physical consummation of marriage. One young couple, married for six years still maintain a Platonic relationship. Another couple had been married with a similar understanding the previous week.

The school is unique, largely an expression of the ideals of its *guru*. It is a strangely fascinating place to visit. It has a quality of unreality, as though I had stepped through a frame into the strange secret life of a picture by Arthur B. Davies.

'Untouchable'

THE first village of aborigines I visited was in the United Provinces of northern India. I was fascinated by the name aborigine until I looked it up and found that it merely meant 'an original inhabitant.' There are gradations even among aborigines. The most primitive ones I saw were a group who lead a parasitic existence. They do not farm, they have no trade. They catch animals, snakes, frogs, rats, for food. They prey upon white field mice. The mice raid the fields planted by peasants in the neighborhood, and lay up stores of grain in their own subterranean tunnels. The aborigines follow the mice to their holes, rip open the tunnels, and take the grain. Their women winnow the grain from the chaff in wicker baskets shaped like dust pans, and this is their main source of food supply.

The aborigines live in mud huts that are little more than animals' lairs. The entrance is so low that they crawl in and out. The thatched roof is disheveled and falling to pieces. Men and women squat listlessly in an open space in the center of their huts. Sitting, chins between their knees—with black skins, flat indented noses and high cheek bones—they move their hands in a curious jerky way, and are almost equally dexterous with their feet. Standing, they stoop forward like

large apes. The men are noticeably more alert than the women.

The Hindu name for caste is *varna,* which means color. Scholars accept the theory that it was to protect the purity of their blood from dark-skinned aborigines that caste originated. It is ironical that Hindus, who feel the pinch of color discrimination so bitterly, should themselves, thousands of years ago, have helped create the tradition of color prejudice. Hindus are of Aryan stock. They have the same shaped skull as ours, the same modeling of feature, turned to tans and browns by some process of biological selection. They are themselves invaders, having pushed down through the Khyber Pass so long ago that there is no record of the migration.

Caste rules are the most powerful force in Hinduism. Every nation, every community, practices some form of social discrimination. In our own democratic country, we have even borrowed the Indian terminology, and our 'Boston Brahmans' are exemplars of esoteric culture. 'Taste makes class.' A certain leveling of people up and down is a natural human process. But when artificial barriers are unduly rigid, caste becomes a handicap, even an economic menace.

Hindu caste restrictions forbid eating with and marrying into other castes. The four main castes are subdivided into more than 2,300 castes and sub-castes. Caste is so deeply ingrained that few rebel against it. Gandhi does not attack caste as such, but its ultimate

exaggeration, the outcastes. Nearly one-fifth of the population, 60 million people, have been cast into a limbo of the unclean—'Untouchables' they are called, the depressed classes, pariahs.

Doomed from birth to illiteracy and destitution, they are limited to the most disagreeable occupations, such as scavenging, and tanning the hides of cattle. They may not send their children to public schools, may not enter the temples, may not even walk on public roads which pass the temples. Perhaps the greatest hardship is that they may not use the village tanks and wells, and often have to carry water long distances. In southern India, undiluted by alien invaders, even the shadow of an outcaste is polluting; the shadow of an artisan at twenty-four feet, a farmer's shadow at forty-eight, a pariah's at sixty-four. They are sometimes required to wear a little bell to give warning of their approach, and to stand back the required distance when they see a caste man. The 'Untouchables' themselves maintain more than twenty caste divisions. They are just as inflexible about intermarriage and interdining as their superiors.

The Muslim and Christian religions both seek converts, and have none of the Hindu prejudice against the depressed classes. After generations of terrorism, the 'Untouchable' discovers that he has a means of shedding his indignities like a chrysalis. No roads are closed to the Indian Christian or Muslim. His children are accepted in the schools. In the last decade, the increase of Hindus has been only one-tenth of one per

cent, while the Muslims have grown by 5 and the Christians by 22 per cent. This difference is due, not to birth rates, but to conversions to Islam and Christianity.

Christian missionaries of half a century ago, working in the depressed villages, began the Mass Movement. Thousands begged to be baptized, entire villages and districts. Mission headquarters were enthusiastic until they realized that their converts were classified in the census as 75 per cent illiterate. Christianity was being identified for the high-caste Hindu with the dregs of his social order. Most of the missions have retrenched, and do not accept converts faster than they can educate them. In the past, Hindus have refused to readmit backsliders into the fold. Today, several organizations specialize in winning back apostates to a reformed Hinduism.

Emancipation of the depressed classes is one of the three social reforms to which Gandhi is devoting himself. He denounces 'Untouchability' as 'the greatest blot on Hinduism.' The orthodox communities have been so infuriated by his attacks that they have organized an 'Anti-Removal-of-Untouchability' campaign. At the height of Gandhi's popularity several years ago, a speaker in Bombay suggested that Gandhi be lynched for his blasphemous utterances.

The depressed classes offer a formidable problem to Indian Nationalists. With one-fifth of the population 'Untouchable,' it would be difficult to conceive a democratic plan of self-government. The 'Untouchables'

on their side are not enthusiastic about *swaraj*. They realize that it would amount to handing the government over to the Brahmans and higher castes who have never shown them any consideration in the past. Their ostracism has cut them off from humanizing influences until, in some cases, they are a menace to society. The famous Indian criminal tribes are an example. For generations they have specialized in some one type of crime because they were cut off from other means of livelihood.

Gandhi was addressing a meeting of 'Untouchables' at Dhasa: "I am bound to see to it," he told them, "that you get enough clean water to drink and to bathe and to wash. But will you not give up eating carrion? It is such a filthy habit, and as long as you cannot give it up, I may continue to touch you, but I cannot hope to succeed with the orthodox Brahmans."

Their spokesman replied, "If we are expected to dispose of dead cattle, you may not expect us to abstain from carrion."

Gandhi told them that Brahmans who own tanneries in large cities do not use carrion.

"That may be, but with us, the habit follows the profession."

Gandhi persisted, "Is carrion delicious?"

"No, not at all."

"Well, I had thought it was. If it is not, and I can assure you enough bread and milk and vegetables, would you not give up carrion?"

There was a long pause. Then the old spokesman

said slowly, "I am afraid no. We must take counsel and then reply to you. It is an old habit, and will persist in spite of you and us. Where is the use of giving a promise if we are to break it the day after you leave us?" (From *Young India.*)

I visited many outcaste villages in the Punjab. It was harvest time, and the *ryots* were at work in the fields. Nine-tenths of the Indian people are *ryots*, living in villages of two or three hundred inhabitants. There are 730,000 such villages, among them many 'Untouchable' communities.

Harvesting is slow work in India. *Ryots*, squatting down, seize a handful of grain, cut it with a hand scythe, and drop it. Slowly they edge their way across the field, cutting the crop a handful at a time. They pick it up and stack it by hand. It is an incredible process to watch.

It was half-past eight in the evening when Miss Forsythe, a Methodist missionary, and I reached the courtyard where she was to hold a service. The *ryots* were coming in from the fields. They had gone to work at five in the morning, as is their custom. About noon, the women took them their first meal, probably a cereal and vegetable curry. After eating, they slept for an hour or two, through the most intense heat. Then they worked until dark. While the moonlight lasted they worked on into the night.

A *charpoy* was lifted into the courtyard for us to sit on. Men and children stood watching. Three women peered round the corner of a hut. We beckoned to

them, and they squatted beside us, their backs to the men, their *saris* drawn over their faces.

A *ryot* with a gourd drum squatted near-by. Another man had a crude violin with a thick round body, which he played like a cello. A third had silver cymbals. While the *ryots* straggled in from the fields, the musicians played and sang. Beyond the score of women at our feet sat a circle of children, most of them very still, holding small brothers and sisters. The outer fringe was of men, supperless, just as they had come from the fields.

The *padre,* or Indian preacher, a kindly looking old man, wore a long yellow tunic. He showed late arrivals where to sit, whispered to the children, suggested the next song. They sang homely Christian sentiments to their own Hindu melodies. The music was fascinating. The drummer beat with one hand a low muffled accompaniment, like distant thunder. On the other side of the drum, he rolled a rapid staccato with his fingers, breaking it suddenly with an explosive bang. The cymbals were not the strident brass of our jazz bands, but a tinkling, silvery accompaniment with sudden sharp clashes that made me tingle.

The moon rose higher, and its light glorified the mud walls and sagging thatched roofs that framed the courtyard, the litter of straw in a corner where cows lay munching. A peasant's dingy, sweat-stained scarf gleamed white as silver against the dark body of his neighbor clad only in a loin cloth.

The meeting lasted until half-past ten. The mis-

sionary broke it up. We had driven far through the furnace heat of April in a Ford, and we were tired. The Indians who had been working since dawn in the blazing sun, with only one frugal meal, would have sat there indefinitely. Not one of them that I could see went to sleep. For two hours they sang and listened to long vernacular speeches from the *padre* about how much Jesus loved them.

I tried to imagine getting a group of our farmers to attend prayer meeting under such circumstances. I wondered what was keeping those *ryots* awake and alert. Was the promise of Christianity so stimulating that they forgot the weariness of the flesh? Did the two strange *memsahibs* make it a festive event? Or was it the music—any excuse for sitting together and singing their own familiar tunes? I can imagine that for the 'Untouchables,' Christianity is actually thrilling in its promise of emancipation, not only for them, but for their children's children.

My associations with prayer meetings had always been somber. This one was different. I thrilled to the exotic strangeness of the scene. In remote villages of the *mofussil,* I had often lain awake fascinated by the pulsing rhythm of drums beating all night long to celebrate a marriage or a festival in some neighboring compound. With a slight poetic license, this earnest prayer meeting transformed itself into the alluring scene I had so often imagined.

The white moonlight on dark, naked bodies, veiled women in shadow, the smell of cattle, and the acrid

odor of cow dung fires, the mournful, wailing music, breaking ever into savage joy and abandon—the whole atmosphere was far from anything that we associate with prayer meetings. They were singing *bhajans* (devotional songs). I could not understand the words, but I could understand the music. The fiddle gave weird minor cadences, the cymbals tinkled silver notes like the flashing of a dancer's anklets, suddenly the drummer banged his hollow gourd in provocative syncopation, and the singers' voices trembled in the frenzy of a wild crescendo.

The Tail Wags the Dog

ANTAGONISM between Hindu and Muslim communities is one of India's most serious problems. It stands implacably in the way of all plans for social and political reform. Remembering the relative size of the two groups, it seems preposterous that the Muslim 20 per cent of the population should stir up such a disproportionate commotion.

Mohammed's followers are comparatively recent arrivals in the long annals of Indian history. They first invaded the northwestern provinces only 1,000 years ago. Not until 1525 did Baber found the Mogul Empire. Although it held on in some form until India was taken over by the British East India Company in 1761, the Mogul Empire had passed its zenith with the accession of Aurangzeb in 1658, a period of less than a century and a half.

The causes of their swift rise to power as analyzed by the standard historians are strikingly the same as the causes which still hold India in submission to an alien government. The Muslims came from a colder climate; they were meat eaters; they were less fettered by their religion. The more invigorating climate and meat diet gave them greater physical energy, a more aggressive attitude toward life, often a larger stature. They were more adaptable. They were not handi-

capped by the caste jealousies and etiquette which weakened the Hindus. The Muslims, with a fine spirit of equality and camaraderie, were a magnificent fighting unit.

Perhaps their most important advantage was their freedom from an excessive respect for tradition and the past. Baber, invading the Punjab in 1519, made the first use of European artillery in the East, while the Hindus continued to rely on the elephants of their ancestors. And the cannon destroyed the elephants like flies.

For a thousand years, Muslims in India have made a noise out of all proportion to their numbers, and have reaped the profit of being aggressive. A minority party, they soon realized that it was essential to stand well with the British *raj*. Whether because of the intrinsic merit of the Muslim, or through his superior capacity to play politics, practically every Englishman in India will tell you that he gets on much better with the Muslim than with the Hindu. This has worked well for the former, and has given him a recognition for which he could scarcely have hoped.

Not many Muslims are in sympathy with the Nationalist movement. They recognize that an extension of *swaraj* increases the power in the hands of the majority group, the Hindus, and opens new possibilities of discrimination against them. This disaffection alone provides something of an *entente cordiale* between them and the British.

One of Gandhi's chief efforts in his heyday was to

develop Hindu-Muslim unity. He made an alliance with the Ali brothers, leaders of the Caliphate movement. In exchange for Muslim support of the Nationalist, he offered Nationalist support of the Caliphate movement—an agitation to 'Save the Caliphate of Islam', Turkey—from the unfavorable peace terms which followed the World War. I saw them together several times, Gandhi and the Ali brothers. The contrast was striking: Gandhi, thin, frail, ascetic, intensely sincere; the Ali brothers, fat, oily, whiskered. Mahomet Ali's face was almost covered with thick, curly black hair. He had fat red cheeks and small close-set eyes.

The reform of Turkey, the exile of the Caliph and the sudden collapse of the Caliphate movement turned Gandhi's efforts into a fiasco. It must have been a very bitter blow to him. A few months later he announced that he did not see any immediate prospect of achieving anything toward Hindu-Muslim unity for the present. He wrote: "There are some diseases which, medical men tell us, are best left alone. The more they are pampered, the worse they become. This communal trouble appears to have developed that character."

Hindu Nationalists commonly accuse the British of fostering animosity between the two communities on the good old principle of Divide and Rule. This charge irritates the British excessively. When the British *raj* granted the Morley-Minto reforms in 1910, they instituted what they called communal representation. This permitted the Muslims as a minority group to

elect a certain number of candidates to Legislative Councils, in proportion to population. This sounds fair enough as a device for controlling a split and harried community. The Hindus, however, feel that as India is their country it is as unfair to make such elaborate provision for a 20 per cent electorate as it would be in this country to provide separate electorates for the Jews in New York, the Irish in New England, and other foreign groups whose numbers reach a certain percentage.

Communal representation has been extended in recent years to local and municipal bodies. Its effect has undoubtedly been to define and intensify the cleavage of interest between the two groups, and to encourage the Muslims to even more articulate and aggressive attitudes.

The Nationalists ask one question which I have never heard satisfactorily answered. If the British do not encourage Hindu-Muslim antagonism—even if ever so subtly—how does it happen that with the exception of the Indian state of Hyderabad, all the Hindu-Muslim rioting occurs in British India? In Bhopal, one of the Indian states, the population is 75 per cent Hindu. The ruling family and most of the court officials are Muslim. One would think that this might develop a tense situation, and yet there has never been the slightest rift between the two groups. When I asked the *Begum* (woman ruler) about it, she said simply, "I try to be fair to both sides, and they trust me and are content."

A Dead Leaf

WHATEVER we may think of Hinduism as a religion, it is as sacred to the Hindu as Christianity is to the West. A religion is a religion, just as a mother is a mother. A man loves his mother even though she be bad-tempered, slovenly, untruthful.

Talking to the devout *sannyasi*, or to the intellectual orthodox Hindu, I realized anew that a religion is an interpretation of a system of ethics, modified by climate and environment to the needs of its people. India's great stone and iron bulls, the many-handed gods dripping with *ghee*, are only the trappings of their belief, an effort to personify and understand the inscrutable forces of nature to which both *rajah* and *ryot* must submit. They correspond to the Saints and Virgins in Christian churches.

Beneath the symbolism, Hinduism and Christianity offer many similar doctrines. The three phrases by which Hinduism is best known in the West are: First, *Karma*, the identical principle that Saint Paul preached in the verse, "For whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap"; second, Transmigration, an extravagant version of the universal belief in immortality, like their more ornate architecture and fantastic mythology; third, *Maya*—illusion—a form of idealistic monism, teaching that this phenomenal world is all unreal.

Christians express a similar thought in their emphasis on the glories and compensations of a future life, as "I'm but a stranger here, heaven is my home." Christian Scientists carry the doctrine of Illusion to what seems to many to be an extreme in denying all reality to matter and pain.

Known as 'Otherworldliness,' the doctrine of Illusion powerfully influenced Western thought during the Middle Ages. The City of God was the abode of the Trinity and the angels "to which those who have been saved by divine grace may look forward from among the woes of this world, as their eternal home" (Thorndike, *History of Medieval Europe*). The result was, as it is in India to-day, to discourage efforts toward social reform and civic consciousness on the ground that nothing matters in this illusory life, that it is only a transitory phase in preparation for a future and better world.

We have our own versions of all three of these doctrines, *Karma*, Transmigration and *Maya*. They have not handicapped Western civilization. Under Hinduism, another element has given them insidious power. Summing up each of the two religions in a word, the word is Love, for Christianity, and Renunciation, for Hinduism. Love is a positive force. It involves doing, is aggressive. Renunciation is negative. It turns the devotee in upon himself, saps ambition and initiative, and obviates the necessity for that continuous adjustment to reality to which the West owes its progress. Renunciation carried to an extreme gives familiar Chris-

tian doctrines a very different emphasis in Hindu life. A certain amount of renunciation is necessary for organized social life; an overdose may turn a tonic into a poison.

In Transmigration, the Hindu conceives a characteristically exaggerated chronology of which four million years have already passed. It stretches on ahead for billions of years, with periodic total destruction of everything that has gone before. He expects to pass through countless lives during these æons, which are to reward or punish him for his conduct during his past lives (*Karma*). The goal which the Hindu sets at the end of this heart-breaking eternity of years is—to achieve complete identification with Brahma, to surrender his human self to the Universal self. To the Hindu such renunciation of individuality, of his very identity, seems the fullness of life. To the average Western mind, it would mean a blank nothingness which would paralyze interest or ambition and result in hopeless fatalism.

The untidiness of Indian streets and houses and the indifference to sanitation illustrate this apathy. Ceremonially, the caste Hindu is most fastidious. He bathes several times a day, and is fantastically meticulous about his food. One of his chief arguments in defense of caste is that the lower castes are not clean in their persons and food. Having observed the forms, he is too indolent to burden himself with consistent cleanliness. It is too much trouble. Why bother?

His apathy makes the Hindu peculiarly susceptible

to the tyranny of tradition, which in India is a synonym for religion. The abuses of the caste system, with its Brahman priesthood and its outcaste group of fifty million 'Untouchables', almost parallel the treatment of women as an obstacle to progress. Both owe their survival to the power of tradition and priestly autocracy.

Hinduism is subject to abuses. So is Christianity. We view our own faults with the lenient eye of familiarity. Many of our customs are as repulsive to the Hindu as some of his are to us. Our meat eating is to him gross. Hunting and the sportsman's life are forms of murder. The symbolism of the Christian sacrament seems to him cannibalistic in suggestion. Our women's free and easy manners shock him. Our commercial exploitation of every phase of life from religion to vice appalls him—Billy Sunday revivals, Atlantic City beauty shows, our publicity methods, the strident atmosphere of our pleasure resorts. The rush in which we live seems to him not only confusing, but vulgar and indecent. We have no time for meditation, to collect our thoughts and taste the savor of life.

Some of the abuses of Hinduism happen to be peculiarly abhorrent to the Western point of view. As long as they persist, the West which, like the East, judges the other by its own standards, will continue to consider the East unfit in those respects. And the East is bound to resent this attitude. The East, unable to compete with the West, falls back on indifference to things of this world, meditates on the Absolute, and taunts us as merchants and money grubbers. There is

truth in the charge. We are absorbed in material interests, industry, science, imperialism. But it is the pressure of material and economic forces which has given the West the lead in world affairs to-day. On a basis of democracy, of the interests of the mass of the people, in making their lives physically comfortable and in giving them opportunities for development and self-expression, the West has advanced further in the scale of evolution than the East.

Indian ascetics achieve a control of their bodies which seems uncanny. After years of training in *yoga* exercises, they are able to suspend all evidence of life, even breathing, and the beating of the heart, for minutes at a time. They do this, not as an achievement, but as an incident in their effort to see God, to merge themselves in Him. Just as their physical control exceeds anything which we of the Western world commonly achieve, I imagine that their emotional susceptibility is correspondingly intensified. I met *gurus* and *sadhus* with the beautiful faces of men who have struggled and suffered. Their dignity and poise reflected glamor upon their way of life, upon that asceticism which is the extreme expression of the Indian will-to-renounce: "to live in the world like a dead leaf."

I am not unappreciative of the positive contributions of Hinduism. Renunciation has diverted many of their noblest minds from preoccupation with the material world. They have devoted themselves to a passionate quest for some loftier solution of the riddle of life, some exalted alternative to their racking bondage

to the wheel of Fate. In their struggles, they have produced masterpieces of philosophical subtlety. They have shown profound and poetical understanding of human aspiration toward truth and beauty. I recognize their contribution to the world's thought. I recognize the charm of individual men, the beauty of a dawn at Benares, a sunset at Muttra.

I seek only to apply to Hinduism its own doctrine of *Karma*—to judge it by its fruits—as exemplified in the present status of Hindu civilization. In proportion to its very great power, Hinduism is responsible for the abuses of its social life, and for the backward condition of its people. I believe that the vaunted spirituality of the Hindu is probably his chief handicap.

Fatalism has dammed up Hindu initiative and will-to-live into a pool as stagnant as their temple tanks. The Indian peasant plows to-day with a crooked wooden stick, as his ancestors did 3,000 years ago. To irrigate his fields, he walks up and down a little gangway, like the pictures in Egyptian hieroglyphics.

Through the centuries, he has offered only passive resistance to one invasion after another. Small armies of more vigorous Northerners have massacred his people, carried his children off as slaves, ravished his women, hacked the heads from every religious carving and idol in northern India, desecrated his temples, looted his land.

To-day, facing the industrial age which confronts the Orient, India's industrial leaders have been with few exceptions Englishmen and Scotchmen. Indians

have, so far, shown little initiative in controlling their industry.

This apathy which has been so important a factor in Indian indifference to the outside world, which has led them to submit to conditions which would have galvanized other nations into revolt, is the ultimate of Renunciation.

I have tried to make two points, first that the power of Tradition and the past has been extraordinarily reenforced in the Hindu's life; second, that the insidious doctrine of Renunciation has so undermined his aggressiveness and independence that he has not the courage to defy Tradition. It is a vicious circle.

Their beloved Saint Ramakrishna summed it up with the felicity of a Hindu poet: "Live in the world like a dead leaf. As a dead leaf is carried by the wind into a house, or on the roadside, and has no choice of its own, so let the Wind of the Divine Will blow you wherever it chooses."

WOMEN

How Sad It Is to be a Woman

"How sad it is to be a woman,
Nothing on earth is held so cheap,"

wrote the Chinese poet Fu Hsuan in the fourth century.

"When the birth of a daughter is announced, dark shadows settle on his face, and he is sad," says the Koran. To me the Indian woman has an especial charm. Like a museum piece, she reminds me of the past. In her grace, her patience, her self-abnegation, she is both winsome and tragic. She tears at my heart while she fascinates me. She suffers under burdens some of which are more cruel and intolerable than anything Western women have experienced. Yet we should meet her with sympathy and understanding. Education, suffrage, machinery to eliminate household drudgery, asepsis, the science of obstetrics—our own emancipation—are all very recent. To-day, the mass of women of East and West live in different worlds. But a narrower gulf than we commonly realize lies between the lives of Indian women and those of our great-great-grandmothers.

It was the honored reformer Luther who, only 400 years ago, standing beside the bed of a woman dying in childbirth, said: "If a woman grows weary and at last dies from child-bearing, it matters not. Let her only

die from bearing. She is there to do it." Christianity which has dominated our Western social code has never quite purged itself of its traditional prejudice against woman. Saint Paul's hostility to women is still symbolized in many churches where the women choir singers must wear little velvet caps because of his words:

"Every woman that prayeth with her head uncovered dishonoreth her head . . . for a man indeed ought not to cover his head, as he is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of the man. For the man is not of the woman, but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman, but the woman for the man."

His stern admonition is heard in countless Christian homes:

"Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the Church. Therefore, as the Church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their husbands in everything."

We associate the Age of Chivalry with a romantic attitude toward woman, but this romanticism was barely skin deep. The right of wife-beating was recognized by several codes of laws. One decree read: "A husband may strike his wife with his fist on the face or on the back for adultery or for contradicting him." It was a step forward, perhaps one of the beginnings of the feminist movement, when in the thirteenth century the 'Coutumes de Beauvois' provided that "a husband may only beat his wife so much as is reasonable."

A Westerner finds much to criticize in the Hindu woman's life. This same Westerner would find much to criticize in the home and environment of his ancestors during the Middle Ages. India has penalized her women with several senseless and abhorrent discriminations such as forbidding the remarriage of widows. Aside from these, I question whether the status of her women is much behind the average cultural level in medieval times.

The wife who bears only daughters is almost as accursed as a barren woman. Her husband may take another wife whom he brings to live in the same house. Only as the mother of sons does a woman attain consideration. There comes back to me the memory of an Indian girl, her slim, childlike figure swathed in a *sari,* half seen in the shadows before the shrine of some god of fertility, beating her temples with her little fists and prostrating herself in the dust.

There are nine million more men than women in India. This proportion is "opposed to experience in most other countries of the world" comments the *India Year Book.* The conspicuous excess of men over women in the Punjab may be explained by female infanticide. Census reports show fewer women among castes which have a tradition of female infanticide than among neighboring castes which have no such tradition. Beside possible infanticide, conscious or unconscious neglect of girl infants helps to keep the number down.

Having survived the perils of infancy, the little girl has scant experience of the Western woman's happy

girlhood. She and her sisters and mother occupy a subordinate position in the home. They never presume to eat with the men. I lunched and dined with a number of prominent Indians. Inviting me to a meal proved that they were very liberal. With few exceptions, the women never ate with us. If there were no other men present, they sat on the floor beside us, fanning us and smiling shyly. I felt very uncomfortable and tried to insist that they join us. The men assured me that their wives would be overcome with embarrassment, and that it did not seem odd to them that a Western woman should eat with their husbands while they did not.

When the men have finished, the women eat what is left. Indian poverty is such that many peasants have only one meal a day. The men, doing heavy work in the fields under the blazing sun, must have food to keep going. Moreover, the man accepts his precedence as a matter of course. I wonder how often the peasant women have enough to eat at their second table. The broomstick legs and arms of the women and girls suggest that it is not often. In the *mofussil* markets where they do not cater to tourists, I could not find a bracelet large enough to go round my wrist.

My impression of the little Indian girls I saw in the poorer homes, in the village streets, at fairs and *melas* is one of a brooding solemnity. I remember many little boys dressed in gold-braided caps and satin brocade coats, swaggering importantly or frolicking with the

abandon of childhood. The little girls kept in the background.

I often saw little girls of six carrying astride their hips boys weighing more than they, and so tall that their feet dangled on the ground. Interested in something, the boy would loose his hold of his sister's neck and run down the street. I suppose these little Oriental potentates find it pleasanter to be carried about on a sister's hip than to exert themselves to walk.

I visited a Bombay municipal school. The girls of eight and ten were tiny things. They wore full-gathered skirts almost touching the floor, and tight-fitting bodices with short sleeves showing skinny little arms loaded with bracelets. There were jewels in their pierced noses and the rims and lobes of their ears. There were rings on their fingers and on their bare brown toes.

They squatted on the floor, working at their *charkhas* (spinning wheels). At a word from the teacher, they rose, grasped the light wooden *charkhas*, almost as long as they were, under one arm, and did a curious dance. Step backward, step forward, and a joyless hop. Backward and forward, and another hop. Not once did they smile. Yet these were exceptionally fortunate little girls, for the proportion of Indian girls attending school is negligible.

They brought in a miniature child of five. She did a pantomime of having lost her doll and finding it. In contrast to the others this laughing baby seemed mar-

velous. She was the school pet. The older girls watched her with a wistful tenderness. The tiny girl held her court with a radiant assurance which threw into relief the self-effacing humility of the other girls. Their frail bodies in long heavy skirts, their hair twisted into tight little knobs gave them a quaint pathos. They had small chance to be children. There was a look in their eyes as though they had already realized 'how sad it is to be a woman.'

Standing with Reluctant Feet

INDIAN child marriage has recently been singled out for particular attack. Hideous stories are told of the torture and injury of individual little girls. Before we condemn Hindu civilization as decadent because it tolerates child marriage, it is well to recall that it is only a few generations since the West abandoned the same custom.

During the Age of Chivalry—so-called—it was common in England and Europe to marry little girls of five years. The Church struggled unsuccessfully to raise the age limit to twelve years. "In theory the knight was the defender of widows and orphans; but in practice, wardships and marriages were bought and sold as a matter of everyday routine, like stocks and shares in the modern market. Lord Thomas de Berkeley (1245-1321) counted on this as a regular and considerable source of income." (*Encyclopædia Britannica*, article on Knighthood and Chivalry.)

Even so late as 300 years ago, it was a common thing for a child to be married at thirteen, and there were cases such as that of little Lady Mary Villiers who was not only a wife but a widow before she was nine.

There has been so much outcry about child marriage in India that it is not generally realized that the custom is far from being universally accepted. It is common

among the Brahmans. As they are the aristocracy, and are scattered all over the land, a superficial observer might gain the impression that every one practiced child marriage. But of 320 million people, only 15 million are Brahmans. Miss Margaret E. Cousins, India's first woman Honorary Magistrate, states that there are fully 200 million Indians who have no tradition of child marriage. She enumerates a long list of Northern tribes, such as the Punjabis and Sikhs; and the coolies and agricultural workers of most provinces.

Latest Government census figures show that over 70 per cent of Indian girls remain unmarried until they are fifteen years old, and that 70 per cent of the boys are unmarried until they are twenty. The Census comments that its records show a steady rise in the marriage age.

It is something of a shock to discover the number of girl and boy weddings in our own enlightened United States. A study of child marriage by the Russell Sage Foundation in 1925 showed that there were in this country 343,000 women married before they were fifteen during the last thirty-six years (no record further back). In 1921 there were in this country 18,388 girls under sixteen who had been married when fifteen years old or less. Two-thirds of these girls were native white and of native parentage. When we remember that girls in the tropics mature several years earlier than in the North, child marriage in India seems less unique.

The Indian custom of infant betrothal has led to confusion of betrothal with marriage. All Hindu

women are married: there are severe penalties for a father who fails in his obligation to find a husband for his daughter. Such a thing is unthinkable to a high-caste Hindu. Caste restrictions limit the field of eligible husbands. The father wants to arrange things well ahead, and many girls are betrothed in infancy. The marriage ceremony may occur at any time during childhood, but this does not imply that the marriage is consummated. Young girls usually return to their parents' home after the ceremony. It is impossible to obtain reliable statistics as to the average age of consummation, which is the crucial point. Indians take the position that marriages are rarely consummated until after puberty. The social reform weeklies once or twice a year contain a horrifying story of the tragic results of some young girl's marriage. I have never seen an attempt to estimate the number of such cases, or to compare their frequency with the numerous attacks on children and young girls in the West. There are little data for deciding whether there is an essential difference in the Indian male, or whether these cases are merely abnormal brutality such as exists in every country. The records of our Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children and our police courts show that we have our share of such perverts.

An Englishwoman practicing medicine in Bombay, Dr. Balfour, gives some interesting figures on the age of Indian mothers at first confinement. ". . . of 304 Indian mothers who were delivered of their first babies in Bombay hospitals, the average age was 18.7 years.

There were only three aged 14, which was the youngest. . . . For the years 1922-24—Madras Maternity Hospital—2,312 mothers were delivered of their first babies at an average age of 19.4. There were seven mothers aged 13 and 22 aged 14. . . . 3,964 cases from other parts of India, including the North, of which only 10 cases were below 15 years, and 13 was the youngest age." (*London Times*, Oct. 9, 1927.)

Only progressive Indians would permit their wives to go to a hospital, which limits these figures to a selected group. It would be absurd to suppose that the average Indian girl is eighteen or nineteen when she bears her first child. The point is that the marriage age is slowly rising, and that the change appears first where one would expect to find it, among educated and advanced Indians. Repeatedly Hindus told me with pride that their daughters were still unmarried in their late teens. They often added that their wives were already mothers at the same age.

The slow, steady rise in the age of marriage, officially recognized by the Census, is due to the efforts of the Indians themselves. Forty years ago, following the suicide of a ten-year-old wife in Calcutta, and against fanatical opposition—because it attacked their religion—the age of consent for married girls was raised from ten to twelve years. In 1924, the age was raised from twelve to thirteen. In 1927, another bill was presented, to raise the age from thirteen to fourteen. Government gives the Indians little or no help in their efforts. It was the British official votes in the Indian

legislature of 1927 which balked the effort to raise the Age of Consent to fourteen. A majority of the Hindu members voted for the bill. But the members appointed by Government defeated it.

It was a surprise to me to discover that in fourteen of our states, the legal marriageable age for girls is only twelve years, giving India an advantage of one year. These fourteen states include New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Some of the indignation lavished on India might well be turned to reforming our own marriage laws.

A Bride of Ten

In India the mother-in-law problem multiplies like the roots of a banyan tree into the joint-family system. All the sons bring their brides to their father's home. In addition, an orphaned nephew and his wife may join the group, besides several widows and other remote connections. Earnings are pooled. Sometimes an energetic man with an established business supports an entire group.

I witnessed part of the wedding festivities of a girl bride in western Bengal. I was interested not only in the little girl, but in the family group she was entering. When I arrived, a group of women stood and squatted in the shade of a compound wall. They were the two wives of a wealthy rice-mill proprietor and the wives of his five sons. The eldest wife was barren. The second wife had borne six sons. They do not bother to mention the daughters: they do not count. The youngest son's wedding was being celebrated with twelve nights of feasting.

The women beamed shyly at me, and the mother sent for a chair for the Western guest. The women drifted back and forth. One of them passed carrying a white-enameled kitchen platter piled high with shining gold, the bride's jewels. The previous week the bridegroom had visited the bride's home 200 miles away,

carrying presents and several thousand dollars' worth of jewelry. The next day he brought the bride home. This was the sixth day of feasting. It would continue for six more days. Every night they had an orchestra, *nautch* girls dancing, and a feast. When it was over, the bride would be returned to her home to stay until she attained puberty.

The main house was an imposing two-story building, one of the town's show places. Pieces of plaster had tumbled out of the façade. Soiled *dhotis*, brass water jugs, bits of waste, were strewn about. Rags fluttered, stuffed between the iron bars of a window. Puddles of dirty water stood in holes in the platform. A dozen gaunt scavenger curs licked at a heap of plantain leaves —discarded plates—in the courtyard. The women threw sticks at them, but the next minute they were back. Flies settled everywhere.

The door opened. The ten-year-old bride appeared. The clanking of her golden anklets made the only sound as she crossed the courtyard, barefooted, to stand shyly before us, her head bent forward. She wore an orchid-colored *sari*, sheer as organdy, shot through with gold, and under it a tight, short-sleeved bodice of purple velvet. Rings on all her fingers and thumbs were attached by gold chains to disks of gold which covered the backs of her hands. From these, the chains ran on up to a series of heavy gold bracelets, two inches wide, which covered her thin arms like armor. Rings, disks, bracelets, all were set with an elaborate pattern of rubies and opals. She also wore many gold chains about her neck

and waist, and a fillet of jeweled butterflies about her head. Her little girl's scanty black hair was twisted into a pathetically tiny knot on the back of her head. Balanced in it precariously were three heavy jeweled combs. She was a tiny child, scarcely coming above my elbow.

I tried to talk to her, but she was shy. Fearing that I should only add to her confusion, I gave it up. She had no smiles for any of us, but obediently did as she was told with wistful gravity. In the midst of those piles of rubbish, rags, puddles, pariah dogs, she stood, a shrinking child, in the filmy loveliness of her Benares *sari* and glittering jewels. She was like a tinsel fairy on the top of a Christmas tree, or rather, like a fairy in an ogre's den.

I wanted to take the bride and groom's pictures. She showed no interest. The groom was sent for. He and his friends, who had been lounging in a corner of the courtyard, had slipped away just before the arrival of the bride. As he came around the corner, the bride bent her head forward, nor did she look up while he was present. It would be impertinent for a bride to look at her husband, even when they are alone.

At first, he refused. His mother explained that his friends would ridicule him as being sentimental. It was apparent that he was quite willing to have his picture taken alone, but not with his wife.

This timid frightened child, stirring softly in her splendor, with none of the gayety and joyousness that belongs to brides, moved me. As lives of Indian women go, she was extremely lucky. Instead of being mar-

ried to some man of forty or fifty or older, her husband was an exceptionally handsome, well-built lad of only eighteen. Quite unreasonably, I resented the supercilious patronage of his attitude, and I did not offer to take his picture alone. He hung about while the women brought out sweets dripping in honey, and spoke to his mother with careful unconcern. He had finally consented to pose with his wife. He was dressed in a collarless white shirt, and *dhoti*. One cuff was fastened, the other carelessly pushed back—to show his wrist watch.

I led the bride to a carved doorway, and motioned to the groom to stand beside her. Presto—the bride disappeared before my eyes. I turned around. All the women were gone. The interpreter and the groom and I were alone. I felt like Alice in Wonderland. When I saw a man crossing the courtyard I understood. He was the local Doctor called in to see a sick baby. He entered the house, and the women reappeared as suddenly as they had vanished. I took some pictures, and we made our mutual compliments. We *salaamed* each other, holding our hands, palms together against our chests and, with many bows and smiles, I came away.

Indian men resent criticism of the joint-family system. They assert that we do not appreciate the position and prestige of their women; that the mother of a family group is as influential in her sphere as any woman in the world, and frequently has autocratic control of family finances. They insist that the hen-pecked male is of common occurrence. Accepting their explanation,

it provides the fortunate woman at the head of the family with a limited range of interests, but makes no adequate provision for the younger women. It does not justify the atmosphere of jealousy and intrigue of the shut-in *zenana* life.

The joint-family system is a device admirably suited to the timid man. He postpones indefinitely the wrench of growing up, putting his childhood behind him, and facing the responsibility of adult life. Through the years he lingers, leaning on his parents and the reassuring intimacy of the family circle. The girl wives of India can only submit to this regimen which makes for an unchanging social order, and holds them in the grip of centuries-old superstition and abuses. The older generation maintains absolute authority until the end. Youth, in whom is the chief hope of change and progress, never has a chance until death clears the way. By that time, the next generation's youth has passed with the premature senescence of the tropics. Middle-age, turning gray and conservative, takes up the scepter.

Behind the Purdah

THE custom of secluding women is not limited to the Orient. Most Southern men have a tendency to keep their women under restraint. In Mexico, Cuba, Spain, the upper-class woman spends her girlhood under a surveillance only different in degree from the *purdah* system. In New Orleans it was until recently, and perhaps still is, the custom among aristocratic old Creole families to keep the débutantes hidden away in their fathers' homes for an entire year before their coming-out ball.

In the old Vedic days, *purdah* was unknown: Hindu women were free. Even to-day in southern India where few Muslims have penetrated, only women of the higher castes observe *purdah*. Hindus assert that they adopted the custom in self-defense, to protect their women from insult and kidnaping by Muslims. There is constant complaint that the Muslims still kidnap Hindu women, particularly low-caste women whose work takes them through the streets.

Purdah knows countless gradations. Thousands of high-caste women never leave their homes from the day they enter them as brides until their death. The fashion has spread downward, each caste below copying it as a mark of refinement. Far down the scale, wives of 'Untouchable' peasants and coolies make a pretense of

observing *purdah* at their *melas*, although they may work in the fields beside their husbands every day. Covering the face like a *purdah* woman is the smart thing, just as in the West a woman applies rouge and lip stick in public, regardless of whether her face is adapted to coquettish wiles.

The strictest *purdah* I saw was in the palace of the Maharana of Udaipur. The *zenana* wing is as secluded as any prison, with no windows, and only tiny chinks for ventilation. High, bare, marble walls, they tower above the beautiful lake as grim as any cell-block. The Maharani never leaves her apartments. Only half a dozen wives of the most aristocratic Rajput nobles have the entrée. English and foreign women are never admitted.

A Muslim official, a *Khan Bahadur*, called on me. He said that he hoped I would call on his wife, that she could not come to see me because she was in *purdah*. Discussing *purdah*, he said that it had been enormously relaxed in the last decade. When he was a boy, in families of his class, a woman was never permitted to leave the *zenana* except for some catastrophe. If her husband lay dying, she might be carried to his side in a curtained *palanquin*. Now it is different, and he added expansively, "I even allow my wife to go driving in the evening in a curtained automobile!"

I entered many *purdah* homes. Some of the women are forceful and aggressive. Most of them tend toward the soft and clinging. The young girls have an indescribable charm. The daughter of a Brahman family

MOST PRIMITIVE ABORIGINES WHO POACH ON THE GRAIN STORES OF FIELD MICE

SIR PRAFULLA CHANDRA RAY, INDIAN SCIENTIST, SPINNING ON HIS TYPICAL GANDHI CHARKA

in Madras was dressed one day when I was there, in a rose-colored *sari*, edged with purple and gold. She sat on a cushion and played the *vina*, a melon-shaped, long-necked, stringed instrument. Her pretty bare feet, stained with vermilion, showed under the edge of her *sari*. Her hands were long and slender, and she touched the strings of the *vina* with studied grace. Her face was framed in the shining jet of her hair, and her dark eyes reflected a wistful melancholy. She was an incarnation of the early Victorian heroine. She sang songs in Tamil and Urdu, set to minor dissonances. Then she sang a curious thing, monotonous, but with an hypnotic cadence. She said it was a snake charmer's song, and I murmured something about its charming more than snakes. She blushed and was delightfully confused.

Purdah will break down gradually. Wives of Indians visiting the West frequently abandon their veils, to resume them on their return home, rather than face a storm of criticism. It is ironic that Turkey, the old capital of Islam, should abolish *purdah* while it still retains its stifling hold in India which copied it from Islam. Kemal Pasha is determined to stamp out the custom in Turkey. He says that he had to hang five men 'to impress on the fanatical zealots' the idea that they must give up wearing the fez as a symbol of their break with the past, and he is prepared to go as far with women. A woman convicted for a third time of wearing a veil will be punished with death.

Indians say that it is the women who cling to *purdah*. Veiled for generations, they shrink from the light. The

men say that the beautiful women might be willing to abandon *purdah* but, they add sadly, there are so few beautiful women! The older women dominate, backed up by the moral support of the myriads of homely women. For such, the illusion of uncertainty is preferable to the anticlimax of reality.

I met two Muslim college girls who refused to unveil, even though the men of their family urged it upon them. When Commencement day came, with the rest of their class unveiled, these two sisters marched up the aisle in *purdah*. I saw one of them riding a bicycle one day. She wore a broad-brimmed sailor hat with a white curtain falling down all around her like a shower-bath curtain.

I was thrilled the first time that a Muslim lady removed her *burka* that I might see her. She was the wife of one of the Ali brothers, leaders of the Muslim Nationalist party. For three days she sat on the speakers' platform at a Congress, a tropical sun beating down on the tent. Gandhi wore only a loin cloth. She wore a full white-linen skirt and shapeless sack coat, and a linen bag pulled over her head. A narrow band of drawn work screened her eyes with holes not as large as the head of a match. At a women's conference, I told her, through an interpreter, that I was in a state of suspense after three days of watching her *burka*. She laughed and pulled it back. I saw a smiling, middle-aged woman, inclined to fatness, whose fine brown eyes suggested that she was once beautiful. The mystery was gone. She was just a woman like the rest of us.

A recent conference of 800 Muslim women in Mysore asked the religious leaders for an authoritative statement of the law, as laid down in the Holy Koran, in regard to *purdah*. With veiling the face a capital offense in Turkey, this question should cause the holy fathers some embarrassing moments. It shows that women are thinking.

Purdah and child marriage have, in the past, prevented the education of women. Only two women in a hundred can read and write. The Indian girl's disabilities are bound up with her illiteracy. They will continue until enough Indian women are educated to furnish leaders and agitators. Statistics show a beginning of progress. The literacy of girls from ten to twenty years old is one per cent higher than that of older women. Spread out over 155 million women, even one per cent mounts up.

A petty Indian official in Lahore summed up one point of view for me. I had been waiting nearly an hour for the signature of a sub-sub-Commissioner to a pass permitting me to visit the old Fort. I asked the middle-aged Indian clerk in whose office I sat if there were any way of making something happen. He was apologetic, the *sahib* was very busy. The *babu* talked of this and that and presently was deploring the degeneracy of these modern days. Things were so much better ordered in his youth.

"Life used to be so simple," he said, "in my grandmother's day. Woman used to work hard, spin, weave, grind the corn, cook the food. It was her duty to pro-

vide her husband and children with food and, after they were satisfied, she might eat. At night, the man went to bed and the woman brought him hot milk and saw to it he was comfortable before she thought about going to bed. To-day, women eat their meals and go to bed and don't care whether their husbands are looked after or not. They think only of themselves. It is too much education." I politely tried to conceal my delight at his words but found it difficult.

The physical consequences of *purdah* are even graver than its paralyzing influence on women's intellectual life. Six girls between the ages of fifteen and twenty die of tuberculosis in Calcutta to every one boy. Dr. H. M. Clakes, the City Medical Officer, attributes the disproportion to the difficulty of maintaining *purdah* in a congested city. Village homes are built around an inner court, open to the sky. In a city, it is difficult to secure privacy without shutting out both light and air, as houses in narrow lanes and gullies are almost certain to be overlooked. The *zenana* is usually situated in inner rooms, ill-lighted and poorly ventilated if at all.

Purdah also prevents women's having adequate medical care. Men doctors may not attend *purdah* women, except to ask them questions through a screen. The supply of women doctors is limited, so much so that there is little demand for them. In none of the mission hospitals which I visited were the beds full. The missionaries said that after raising money and equipping their clean, airy wards, the great problem was to get patients.

The women are afraid, or their husbands will not let them come.

The girl wives of India enter upon their lives of continuous childbearing aided only by ignorant midwives, recruited from the lowest class of women, the outcastes. Social workers in this country are familiar with the horrors of unclean midwives in our unassimilated foreign colonies, and among our negroes and our mountain whites. Women of these groups cling to their midwives so tenaciously that we have begun a system of inspection and licensing, which may some day clear up the worst of our abuses. We have to bear in mind that we in the United States have the highest death rate of women in childbirth of any Western nation. In 1925, 18,000 of our mothers died in childbirth, a mortality of 7.5 per cent for the United States, as compared with 3.8 per cent in England. Taking into account our high standard of living, of sanitation and of hospital facilities, it is probable that our large percentage of midwives is responsible for this national disgrace.

In proportion to population, fifty Indian mothers die in childbirth for every English mother, according to an estimate by the Bengal Social Service League. Infant mortality figures are appalling. In Bombay, the average infant mortality for the five years, 1918-22, was 572 deaths per 1,000 births. In 1921 it reached a high point of 667. The corresponding rate in London is 68 and in New York 85.

Birth control is an imperative reform for India. In

the last fifty years, the population has increased from 200 to 300 millions. Considering that over half the babies die in their first years, such an increase means a staggering burden of childbearing. At the hotel news stand in Bombay I saw displayed among the current novels a bright yellow pamphlet, '*Birth Control*, by N. S. Phadke, Secretary, Bombay Birth Control League.' I bought a copy for eight *annas* (sixteen cents). It was clearly written, and gave explicit instructions. Similar pamphlets have been translated into the vernaculars and are gradually being distributed.

Many arguments for birth control in India suggest themselves. Yet its introduction will be even slower and more difficult than in this country! It is too rational and scientific in spirit. It is opposed to that medieval fatalism which follows the path of least resistance. Indian asceticism opposes it. Gandhi exhorts his followers to practice self-control, or to lead celibate lives.

The Head that Wears the Crown

In my limited experience of royal *zenanas*, I was conscious at times of a depressing atmosphere of helpless submission to tyranny. I shall not attempt to describe these unhappy *zenanas* as it would be a breach of hospitality. Instead, I shall quote from a letter written by an Indian Princess which appeared in the *Bombay Chronicle* during the winter of 1926-7.

"It will seem strange that a person from my class should seek the help of the public, and that through the agency of a daily paper; but there are limits to human patience and suffering. It is impossible to bear the strain of life-long neglect and ill treatment . . . For generations we have quietly suffered untold and unbelievable wrongs; but this is a new age. Even we behind the *purdah* have felt the breath of the new spirit.

"Our grandmothers put up mildly with insults and humiliation without a word of protest. They accepted their fate ungrudgingly. They allowed themselves to be treated like pet dogs. Our mothers showed a slightly different spirit. They cried and killed themselves when the agony was unbearable, but the new generation has started to protest. Why should we not protest? We are also human. We have received little education, but we had English governesses to instill new ideas into our heads. Even we dare to dream in terms of self-determination.

"Persons of my class are married off when they are quite young. My father's house is of middling importance. I

was brought up and educated with my brothers. My parents prided themselves on being modern. At the time of my marriage, a decent sum of money was paid to my lord, presumably for my maintenance, but not a *pice* has ever been available to me. I did not understand what marriage was, except that I had to leave a happy home, and in future I had to stay with strangers. But I was old enough to understand that the Prince who married me belonged to a big House, and I did dream dreams of splendor.

"When I went to my new home, I wanted my governess to accompany me, but that was not allowed. I was well looked after, however, well dressed and kindly treated. One day the news came to me with a shock that the Prince had two other wives, and that there were other women also with whom the Prince spent weeks. When the Prince came to me, I talked to him very cautiously, but he was absolutely brutal about it. He told me things that I refused to believe. I never thought that any man could possibly be so inhuman.

"I found out a pretext for returning to my parents. There, I created a scene, but my aunt told me horrible stories, and eventually, I returned to my master. All pride of family greatness, of purity of married life, was knocked out of me. Purity does not exist for such Princely Masters. They are above such human considerations of virtue. . . .

"The State *Jhaverkhan* is at my disposal, but not one little thing belongs to me. The same applies to dresses, motors, horses and servants. A fairly large sum of money is placed at my disposal in the family budget, but I may not spend, well, practically anything without the previous sanction of my husband. This total dependence is deliberately enforced. I have been made to pocket insults, and they say that self-respect is a commodity unknown in the palace. . . .

"God alone knows what has happened to our Indian Princes. Why are so many of them running after baby faces? Why have they become so recklessly careless of their

name and reputation? When the whole country is being influenced by high ideals and is striving to improve itself, so many Princes are taking the downward course. It is obvious that some of them go to Europe just with a view to enjoy personal liberty, so that they may indulge in license without any check. They are neglecting their State affairs. Their people are angry with them, but what do they care? The Government is pursuing a policy of non-interference; perhaps they are giving them the long rope so that they may eventually hang themselves.

"The subjects of the Princes have become vocal, and they are raising their voices in complaint. Perhaps the Viceroy will listen to them, but how are our grievances to be redressed? I have consulted political officers, they give me no hope. We are to be treated as chattels. There is not much difference in the treatment that a Princess and a Court courtesan may receive. We have no rights, we cannot combine as you men may. I consulted a prominent politician who is also a lawyer. He would give me no hopes. Intrigue with political officers and with the Political Department is unsuitable to my nature. I want my rights. I want my status to be regularly defined. I want to fight for the many voiceless women who are being ill-treated. I say that they are reduced to a condition which is worse than that of beggars in the street. Our duty is merely to satisfy the whims of our masters. We are deprived of our self-respect. If we assert our right of being human, our lord may neglect and punish us. We are threatened with this every moment of our lives. The Prince has no duty toward us, we have no rights except such as a kindly political officer may get for us.

"We are worse treated than the Russian serfs of yesterday. You politically-minded men rejoice when the Nepal Government frees thousands of slaves, and yet you do not know that, side by side with you, live your own sisters whose existence is worse than nightmare. You will say that there is

morbid exaggeration in my account. So said people in regard to Russia, Congo and elsewhere. You are grieving and praying over the fate of the Indians in South Africa, but will you not listen to the tragic appeal of your sisters?"

Her Highness the Maharani of Baroda is one of the most active and progressive Princesses in India. She is a power, not only in her own state, but throughout the nation. In her opening address as chairman of the All-India Women's Conference of 1927, Her Highness spoke of the potential power of the Princesses as leaders of the women of India, if they could escape from their own bondage. Referring to the letter just quoted the Maharani said:

"The need of these Princesses has been recently expressed in heart-rending terms in the columns of a Bombay daily paper. It must be taken as an indication of the position of the writer that she has had to adopt such means to make it known. In expressing my sincere regret that this Princess, who is unknown to me as she is to you, should have had to adopt this method of stating her grievances, I must nevertheless welcome the sign that at last the position of this group of women in our land is finding an expression. This Conference should state in no uncertain terms its view on the reforms needed in this direction."

Cold Sati

It is a tradition peculiar to the Hindu that widows may not remarry, not even baby girls wedded and widowed in infancy; virgin widows, they are called. There were in 1921, 27 million Indian widows, one widow for every five women. Twelve thousand of these widows were babies under five years old. A million and a half were less than twenty-five. In England there are no widows under twenty. In India, of every thousand girls under twenty, sixty-one are widows.

Hindu mystics have written beautiful phrases about the sacrament of marriage. It transcends physical consummation. The miracle merging the two in a divine unity occurs during the marriage ceremony, although both parties to it may be unconscious infants.

The beauty of this thought would be more convincing to me if it applied to the man as well as the woman. Hindu widowers remarry in about the same ratio as Western widowers. A baby girl whose husband dies a day or a week after the ceremony is as much his widow as though she had lived with him for years and borne him children. The idea is that when the man dies, the wife, whose sole purpose it is to serve and please her husband, dies too. That is the symbolism of *sati*—burning the widow on her husband's funeral pyre. 'Cold

sati' is the ironical terms for the widow's life, the living death to which she is now condemned.

In the fifties of the last century, Pundit Iswarchandra Viyasagar began an agitation which led to the passage of an Act legalizing the remarriage of widows. It was nearly sixty years, however, before the Act began to show results. In 1914 Sir Ganga Ram, a philanthropist of Lahore, founded the Society for Promoting and Helping Widow Remarriage among the Hindus. "When I began," Sir Ganga told me, "only one widow had been married in the Punjab for two years. You can scarcely imagine what bitter opposition we met. . . ." In 1926, Sir Ganga's Society reported 3,172 widow remarriages for that year.

Sir Ganga, who died in 1927, was a widower, an elderly man with something of that brisk, energetic manner that distinguishes the successful business man East and West. He lived in a large, rambling white house, hidden behind high walls, and his three sons and their wives lived with him. He was at the head of most of Lahore's philanthropies. When I asked which interested him most, he said at once, the remarriage of widows. He showed the keenest interest as he told me of his training-school for widows who do not wish to remarry, but to become self-supporting. They are taught to weave, sew, operate knitting machines. With characteristic alertness, Sir Ganga asked me to let him know if there were any other cottage industries which he did not have.

One late afternoon, I visited the Widows' Home, a

group of rambling, two-story buildings, enclosed in a high-walled compound. The widows were eating their evening meal, squatting on the floor, backs against the wall, down a series of long corridors. I heard no chatter or laughter. There lurked an atmosphere of the nameless horrors which had broken the spirit of these women, most of whom were still young girls. I saw a little Brahman widow of whom Sir Ganga had spoken. She was a pretty, fragile child of ten years, who had been married at three and widowed at nine. We could not coax her to raise her head to look at us, nor to speak. After her husband's death, her father-in-law used to beat her, and make her work very hard. She belonged to a hill tribe and tended sheep and goats in the fields all day. At night, she came home to struggle with the heaviest and hardest household tasks. A widow in the same village reported her case, and the Society rescued her from her family-in-law.

In the infirmary, a girl was lying on a *charpoy*, shaking convulsively and moaning. The Superintendent, a kind, practical woman, put her hand on the girl's shoulder, but could not attract her attention. The girl had been subject to these attacks since she entered the school three months before. Following them, she would be unconscious for a day at a time. As we walked down the shadowy corridor, followed by those low, shuddering moans, the superintendent said, "These girls have been through so much that their nervous systems are shattered, and it is a matter of months and even years of patient kindness to build them up."

Organizations devoted to widow remarriage show an encouraging increase in the last few years, but men have had to do all the pioneer work.

"Even now," reads an editorial in the *Indian Social Reformer*, "few Hindu women will speak on widow remarriage from a public platform. Married women seem to feel the advocacy of the remarriage of widows as a piece of disloyalty to their husbands. Widowed women feel that their plea for the reform may be understood as a plea for their own remarriage."

A recent incident in Calcutta illustrated the resistance which a socially backward community offers to change and reform. The Marwaris are famed and feared as money lenders. They are shrewd and many of them amass riches. Socially they are an especially reactionary group. A young Marwari, Nagarmal Lilha, married a virgin widow last winter. Shortly afterward, he took his old mother, who was suffering from dropsy, to the Marwari hospital in Calcutta. In a day or so, the rumor reached the hospital that the old woman's son had married a widow. Although she was dying, the authorities turned her out. After some delay, she was taken to another hospital, where she died next day. In answer to protests, the hospital authorities justified their action by saying that several other women patients refused to touch food so long as the mother of a man who had married a widow remained under the same roof.

Eight thousand widows are attached to the various temples of Brindaban, one of India's seven holy cities. I visited Brindaban on a *mela* day when the god Krishna

left his temple for his annual outing in a gigantic temple car resembling one of the famous Juggernauts.

The great car passed, the crowd pushing after it, and I turned back to the temple. I looked up vistas of long avenues within the high walls. Broad flights of steps led down to sacred tanks. The houses of the Brahman priests clustering around the temple made a good-sized village.

This temple is one of the richest in India. It draws taxes and rents from many neighboring villages, including one-quarter of the city of Brindaban. Its priests travel over India recruiting unhappy widows who have any property and who wish to escape persecution in their homes to join the temple's colony of widows. On arrival, the widow makes over her property to the temple and, in return, is given a tiny cell and one meal a day for the rest of her life.

The pulsing drums and cries of the crowd surrounding the temple car had died away. I heard a low chanting. There was no lilt to this sound. It was a tragic, haunting undertone. In a corner of the wall, hidden in foliage, 700 widows squatted on the ground. For four hours every morning they sit here singing over and over in a low, spiritless monotone, 'Ram, Ram, Sita, Ram; Hori bal, Radha, Krishna; Ram, Ram, Sita, Ram,' etc. At noon, they have their only meal of the twenty-four hours, a bowl of rice and curry. At three, they return and sit in silence for another four hours, praying and fingering their rosaries.

The hubbub and gayety of the *mela* just over the

walls seemed unthinkable in the presence of this living death. Some of these women had been widows all their lives. From the first dawn of consciousness they had been held accursed. The widow is taught that her husband's death is due to some negligence on her part, perhaps a punishment for sins in a previous life.

Her clothes and jewelry are taken from her, even the glass bangles are broken from her wrists. Her head is shaved. She wraps her body in a single coarse garment of unbleached cotton or of faded brick-red. Both are mourning. She has only one meal a day, and many fast days. She does not eat with the women of the household, but after they have finished. During weddings and gayeties, she keeps out of the way because her presence would be an evil omen. Under the joint-family system, she has only a limited interest in her husband's property, and no power of disposal over his estate.

Like a faded quilt of white and terra cotta patches, the 700 women squatted on the ground, moaning, 'Ram, Ram, Sita Ram,' to the clinking of their tiny brass cymbals. I looked from one face to another—such sad, scarred faces. An artist wanting to paint the tortures of a soul in hell would only have to catch the look of those women's eyes.

I did not see any of the younger widows, the little girls who are thrust into this charnel house of widowhood before their lives have even begun. There may be some good reason for keeping all the young widows inside the temple, but it seemed sinister.

I met a Bible-woman at the near-by hospital of the American Methodist mission. She had formerly been a widow in this temple. She was a pleasant-faced woman of forty-five, a Brahman with fine features, and dignity of bearing. Betrothed in infancy, she had been married at nine. Her fourteen-year-old husband died, and she was left a widow before she was eleven years old. A holy man from Brindaban, traveling through Bengal, recruiting widows for the temple, added her to his train. She was put to work in the temple, cooking food for the gods (which the priests eat), washing the priests' clothes, serving as their mistress. When her child was born, she developed septicemia. She was brought secretly at night, and left lying at the gates of the hospital compound, where the missionaries found her in the morning. Perhaps some young priest had loved her, and could not bear to see her die without giving her a chance.

She was desperately ill for months. She could not speak to any one, for she was a Bengali, and the missionaries spoke the local dialect, Hindi. Finally, there came a missionary who also talked Bengali. The widow became a Christian, and joined the mission staff. For twenty years, she has lived in one of the white-washed cubicles which line the walls of the mission compound. Her room was very neat, her white *sari* spotless.

I questioned her through the interpreter. She expurgated her story—which I had already heard—down to a prosaic conventionality. She had been visiting some family friends here in Brindaban when she chanced to

meet a mission worker. She was converted and joined the mission. She parried my questions smoothly, and I respected her for wanting to sink back into commonplace nonentity, instead of exploiting her sufferings in lurid style.

Although outlawed for over a century, *sati* still holds a cherished place in the hearts of both men and women. It is only a perversion of one of woman's most vulnerable traits, her capacity for uncalculating surrender to the man she loves. Symbolically it is a fitting climax to the Indian philosophy of renunciation—giving up life itself.

I attended a popular Indian movie in Calcutta, *Shiva Rastri.* It was arranged and acted by an Indian company. The plot, from their mythology, dealt with the intervention of the goddess Parvati in the affairs of men. The hero, a swaggering bully, left his family to starve, came home drunk, beat his wife, killed his son. At long last, the goddess caused a change of heart, and the Hero stumbled home, worn out by dissipation, but repentant, to die in his wife's arms. The final scene was a close-up of the funeral pyre. The widow sat enthroned, pillowing her dear lord's head in her lap with a smile of ecstasy until the flames, licking and leaping, hid her from sight.

An Indian audience is remarkably apathetic. It just sits. At this picture of *sati,* however, a burst of applause swept the hall. I looked up at the curtained balcony where the women sat, but the roar was so great that I

could not be sure whether the women were clapping. I surmise that they were.

The head of one of the few colleges for women in India retired after twenty-five years of service. In a country where fewer than two women in a hundred can read and write, graduates of this college represent a high degree of selection. Her girls stood to this American teacher for her life's achievement. They clubbed together to give her farewell presents. One group brought a painting. It represented, they said, the highest ideals of Indian womanhood. It would carry a message from her students to her friends in America. It was a picture of *sati*. Lurid crimson flames writhed and coiled about an Indian woman whose face was set in an ecstasy of renunciation.

THERE is one alternative for the desolate widow—a life of prostitution. It is the young widows who furnish most of the inmates of Indian brothels.

Vigilance associations against vice have been organized in Bombay, Calcutta, Madras. They have secured the passage of an act authorizing them to rescue any girl under sixteen found in a brothel. The troublesome question arises what to do with these girls when they are rescued. The close-knit social system offers no shelter, no means of livelihood for these girls. Before attacking the brothels, the reformers must build rescue homes.

There are in Calcutta sixty-eight men to every thirty-two women. Men crowd to the city for work, leaving their families behind. They send money home and, at harvest time, many return to take in the crops. Then they drift back to the city. Such a disproportion of men and women makes for abnormal social conditions. The Calcutta Vigilance Association estimates that there are 2,000 girls from nine to thirteen years old held in the brothels of that city. Many have been kidnaped from their village homes. A large number are widows.

I drove through the segregated district of Calcutta one evening. Carved wooden balconies overhung the brightly lighted street. Girls leaned over the railings.

A continuous line of men streamed down the center of the street, and girls called to them softly. Small groups of girls huddled at the corners of buildings, as though frightened at their defiance of convention. Their faces were unveiled, but they were modestly dressed, and seemed timid.

I stopped the victoria on Chitpore Road, and sat watching for ten minutes. Young men passed in motors, in carriages, on foot. Many were dressed in the fine white linen, fresh and sheer, that bespeaks the man of means. Though I was alone, no one spoke to or even looked at me in a discourteous manner. They paid no attention to me.

As I drove down the Road, I passed a marble pavilion, brightly lighted. In the center stood a tomb, covered with a scarlet satin pall, embroidered in gold. The heavy fragrance of jasmine and tuberoses filled the air. An old *sadhu* had sat at this corner for many years. The girls passing threw him alms. They insisted on observing the custom of burying his ashes on the spot where he died. The girls raised money for an elaborate funeral, and built this pavilion. Every day they cover his tomb with fresh flowers, though he has been dead for several years. In the early evening, before the stream of night life reaches its height, they bring their *vinas* and, kneeling behind his tomb, they play and sing to him. They had nothing of the hard look of Western prostitutes. With their dark eyes and gentle faces, crouching behind the garish satin pall, on that strange street corner, they made a wistful picture.

Across the street, cadets, who lived on these girls, lounged on window ledges and smoked and chewed *pan*.

I drove through the segregated districts of other Indian cities in daylight, and saw typical hard-faced, made-up sporting women leaning from their balconies over the bazaars. That night in Calcutta a mysterious glamor hung over the district. The old beldames kept out of sight. The entrances to the houses blazed with light. Untidy alleys were hidden in shadow. The girls seemed young and timid. It is a curiously unreal memory.

K. T. Dange of Poona has described the life of the low-class prostitute. His account checks up with what was told me by others:

"With a view to see whether it was possible to send them to workhouses, I visited one day a den of lower prostitutes. Some women were drinking, some were singing objectionable songs, and some were chewing *pan*, smoking *biries* and abusing each other.

"They get up from their ragged beds late, at 10 a.m., and then prepare tea, or go to a hotel for it. Afterward, they purchase a small amount of rice or corn, and prepare some food. Some live only on loaves of bread and tea purchased from a hotel. They do not take a bath daily. They generally take a nap at noon. At 3 to 4 p.m. they begin to dress themselves with a good *sari*, oil their hair, and part them according to modern fashion.

"From this time, 5 p.m. to 5 a.m., they sell their persons for even 2 *annas* (4 cents), or at times, for a cup of tea only. A woman in this den earns at least *Rs* 2 (75 cents) a day. But much of it is spent on drinking and in giving some *bakshish* to policemen for allowing them to keep their windows open late at night, and in giving small amounts to Pathans

and Marwaris, who are their constantly (*sic*) money lenders, taking 200 per cent or more interest on the sums advanced.

"The Pathan keeps an eagle eye on his client every night to see how much is earned, in order to extract the same at once. The Marwari generally takes in pawn their *saris* and utensils. The articles are never reclaimed. The visitors to the den of these prostitutes are generally low-class people, Indian soldiers, loafers, ruffians. These visitors pay if they like, or threaten them to submit their persons gratis. Quarrels generally take place, and the police are called upon to stop them, for which they are rewarded by both parties to keep 'hushush.'"

A peculiarly revolting phase of prostitution is the dedication of baby girls as *devadasis*, or Lotus Buds, to serve the gods in the temples. This hideous form of the oldest profession in the world is hereditary among the women of certain castes in southern India.

Originally, according to Hindu accounts, these little girls were carefully guarded. They ministered before the shrine, weaving sacred garlands, worshiping the god with the slow posturings of Hindu dances amid smoking incense and the fragrance of flowers. They were seduced by the priests, and gradually the circle of men whom they served enlarged until they became public prostitutes. They also furnished the *nautch* girls who dance and entertain at ceremonies, weddings and religious feasts.

Like all the other abuses wished upon Indian women, the *devadasis* are supposed to have been sanctioned by Hindu scripture. Modern reformers question the authenticity of any such sanction and seek to discredit the use of *nautch* girls and *devadasis*.

Poking Holes in the Curtain

More than any other sign of the times, the beginning of a woman's movement convinced me that India is changing. It is by no means a smaller edition of our women's clubs, but quite different. I attended my first women's conference at Belgaum in connection with the National Congress. It was in the afternoon. Gandhi was speaking. Squatting on the ground, packed close together, sat a thousand women, most of them nursing babies. They sat unveiled, for they do not observe *purdah* with Gandhi. He spoke in English and a majority of the women did not understand him.

They sat still as statues, watching his face like deaf people. The babies, pressed close to their breasts, were quiet and, in all that crowded tent, there was not a sound for the fifteen minutes of Gandhi's talk. His compassionate voice, his pleading eyes conveyed his message. He gave the women three short *mantras* or verses: 1, Educate yourselves; 2, Be faithful in spinning every day; 3, Be kind to 'Untouchables.' When he had finished, women ushers struggled to clear a passage for him. Women reached out their babies' hands to touch the end of his scarf. Others bent and 'took the dust of his feet.' As the tent flap fell behind him, the women squatted down, shifted their babies, and began to talk it over. The women who had understood

translated for their neighbors. No one was noisy, but what a chatter they made all together in that torrid tent under the blazing sun!

The chairman, a brilliant woman, rose and waited for quiet. She waved at the audience. They paid no attention. Other women leaders went to the edge of the platform and waved. A young Indian woman sat next to me on the edge of the platform. She was the daughter of one of the speakers, an attractive girl, just back from England where she had been educated. She had all the sophistication of a Western woman. With curling lip she watched the expanse of brown faces framed in dull red and blue *saris*. Suddenly, leaning over, she shouted, "For God's sake keep quiet." Her eyes flashing, her voice trembling, she added in an undertone, "Animals!"

The noise wore away. The speaker berated the women angrily. She said she would rather speak to an audience of 5,000 men than to 500 women; that they could not expect to have a woman's movement or anything else until they acquired the self-control to sit still and keep quiet. After her speech, resolutions were passed in cut-and-dried fashion.

Leaving the tent, my young companion abused the women. She said that they were such a stupid, ignorant lot. I ventured that they could not help it if their babies cried. She laughed scornfully: "They didn't make a sound when Gandhi was speaking. You could have heard a pin drop. As soon as he left, they all talked and moved around just to show that they didn't

care about the rest of the meeting. I don't blame the speakers for being furious. They adore Gandhi so—it's really sickening."

The pretty girl unconsciously shocked me. I had not expected such rankling jealousy. The immediate effect of the conference was depressing. They gave me a carbon copy of the Resolutions, but I doubt whether many of the audience understood or even heard them. They were just something to give the press, and keep up the notion that they had had a woman's conference.

I reminded myself that it was most unfair to be critical and to expect this mass of women to spring phœnix-like into a fully developed federation of women's clubs. Their presence at the Congress was an immeasurable advance. Sometimes they listened to the speakers. Sometimes they were occupied with their children. These mothers were so young. They might have been a class of solemn-looking little girls playing doll.

It is equally as unreasonable to be impatient with the women on the speakers' platform as with the audience. They have won their position of leadership at the cost of incredible courage and sacrifice. What wonder if they lose their poise now and then. They too need time.

The Indian press reports women's meetings covering a broad range of subjects. Innumerable mass meetings of women were held during 1927 in every part of India on behalf of the bill raising the age of consent for married girls from thirteen to fourteen. The first All-India Women's Conference was held during the spring

of 1927. Delegates representing 7,000 women came from twenty-one constituent conferences. H. H. the Maharani of Baroda presided. Princesses, women doctors, lawyers, pioneers in literature, art, education and social service attended the four-day session. Another organization, the Women's Indian Association, is ten years old, has sixty-one chapters and 3,000 members.

The women who draw up resolutions for these conferences are courageous. One resolution set forth that "moral training based on spiritual ideals should be made compulsory for all schools and colleges;" another that, "in education of girls and women, teaching in ideals of motherhood, beautifying of home, as well as training in the methods of social service should be kept uppermost." I felt a bit wistful for my incorrigibly idealistic sex who, struggling against intolerable abuses, have the courage to demand for their daughters training in spiritual ideals and the beautifying of the home!

CHANGE

Problems of community life fall into two groups. Paupers, orphans and cripples are part of the riddle of the universe. Every country also has indigenous problems rising from local situations, such as our Chicago gang wars, the Ku Klux Klan and, in Italy, Fascismo.

Recognition of these conditions is part of our scientific realism. Social consciousness like sanitation is a modern refinement. In the Middle Ages, the only palliative for social abuses was Sweet Charity. India still maintains the custom of hit-and-miss giving. Banquets for the poor and outcaste are an important part of coronations, birthdays and weddings. Organization for coöperative civic effort is almost unknown.

The Indian inclination toward asceticism inspires a large number of men of ability to sacrifice all material interest and devote their lives to Mother India. Educated in the West, or influenced by Western educators, they see the need for change as dispassionately as their critics. Many of them refuse to take part in politics until basic social reforms are effected. They are building orphanages, hospitals, industrial schools, and organizing children's courts. In attacking indigenous problems such as the status of women, widow remarriage, caste, sacred bulls, five million beggar priests, they chal-

lenge traditions accumulated over thousands of years. It is uphill work.

I saw men sitting on the dais at the Cow Conferences to whom it was all as archaic and incongruous as it was to me. They have to compromise. Many of India's abuses are sanctioned by her best people. It is not possible for men capable of organizing needed reforms to defy the deepest prejudices of their community in India any more than in this country. Such an attack would alienate the support needed to make the reforms effective.

A distinguished group, vowed to poverty and life-long service, is the Servants of India Society, founded by Gokhale in Poona, southern India, in 1905. This Society is an interesting combination of Eastern and Western points of view; Eastern asceticism, and renunciation of worldly ambition is combined with Western standards of social reform, scientific method and spirit of service to the community.

Only men of achievement are invited to join. Members have influence and prestige. They serve a five years' apprenticeship, and are free to withdraw if they do not feel 'the call.' Their salary begins at $17 a month, and reaches a maximum of $40 after ten years. All outside earnings from books, lectures and the like are turned over to the Society. Their lives are insured for $1,000 for the benefit of their families. This is the only concession to the future.

The Servants of the People, founded by Lala Lajpat Rai in Lahore, northern India, in 1920, is a similar

organization of 'national missionaries,' vowed to poverty, who devote their whole time to national service, giving special attention to the depressed classes.

Most of the interesting Hindus I met were members of the *Brahmo Samaj*, a country-wide movement toward reformed Hinduism. The *Mahasabha*, a 'hundred per cent' type of organization, secures the cooperation of orthodox Hinduism for social reform. The Moslem League rallies the Muslims. In Madras, southern India, where the power of the Brahman has always been most autocratic, the lower castes have banded together with Muslims, Christians, even 'Untouchables,' and formed a powerful non-Brahman party, which has controlled local politics for several years.

Many varieties of reform movements express all shades of opinion from radical to conservative. They are very active, publishing pamphlets and periodicals, organizing *dewans*, or conferences, village tours, gala processions, magic-lantern lectures. The weekly paper, *The Indian Social Reformer*, founded in 1890, is a model of a journal of civic affairs. It not only covers the country, but shows a sense of news values which keeps it interesting and diversified. Year in and year out, it maintains an admirable sanity and balance.

Since the loss of his political power, which rapidly declined after his imprisonment in 1922, Gandhi has devoted himself to social reform. He symbolizes the transition between the mysticism and asceticism of the East, and the new India of an awakening social con-

sciousness. He combines the two with the inconsistency of an individualist.

As a Hindu, Gandhi is supremely devout. Indians reverence him as an avatar, one of those Saints, half human, half divine, who bless the world with their presence every ten or twenty centuries. Gandhi's most famous doctrine is *Satyagraha*—soul force. Whatever he wants to accomplish, he appeals to his followers for more *Satyagraha.* It has been defined as "Soul-force exerted by a multitude of people all wishing hard for what they desire. In order to be in a position to wish hard, they must divest themselves of their worldly possessions, and of their earthbound desires."

In his social reform program, Gandhi has concentrated on three objectives. Two of them are eminently practical: reconciling Hindu-Muslim antagonism, and removal of 'Untouchability.' No one questions their primary importance. There is more difference of opinion on his third measure, which is criticized as visionary. It is his crusade to stem the tide of factory production, boycott factory-made cloth and reintroduce hand-spinning as a cottage industry. He attempts to pledge all his followers to spin at least one-half hour each day on the *charkha* and to wear only homespun *khadi.* He has carried his beloved *charkha* far into the realms of mysticism, and invested it with properties of mental and physical restoration such as are commonly attributed to the relics of a Church Saint. Enthusiastic disciples assert that daily spinning has cured them of asthma and other ills.

Beyond these three cardinal interests, Gandhi is always ready to coöperate with progressive causes. He defies the menace of orthodoxy, and constantly renews his attacks, both in speeches and in his weekly paper, *Young India*, against child marriage, and the disabilities of widows. He is indefatigable in his campaigns against opium, intemperance, neglect of cattle, filthy habits. In his personal life, he practices an almost incredible asceticism. His diet is limited to fruit juice, goat's milk and hard biscuit. He has forsworn cow's milk because the cow is sacred. He says that it is one of the great disappointments of his life that, because of his delicate health, he has been unable to accustom himself to a milkless diet. Such matters are of vital importance to him.

He shrinks from machinery, railroads, modern medicine, all the specialization of a scientific age, as non-essentials, crowding our days too full, denying us leisure for meditation and self-realization. When he compromises and himself uses these abominations, he does so with a half-humorous apology. So long as they exist—he says in effect—but I should so much rather do without them, if only they could be banished from the world and we return to our old simplicity of life.

I had the pleasure of several conversations with Gandhi. Mrs. Sarojini Naidu first introduced me to him late one afternoon during the National Congress in Belgaum. "You may walk back to my house with me," Gandhi said. The meeting ended, and I joined him. Fifteen thousand delegates sat cross-legged under the

vast homespun tent, waiting until the *Mahatma* (a title meaning Great Soul) reached his house, a hundred yards distant, before they dispersed.

We walked between living walls of Indians. Naked children crouched in front. Flashing turbans, jeweled nose-rings, eager faces of thousands of peasants filled in the mosaic of the wall. Men and boys on bullock carts sketched an uneven frieze. They had stood in the blazing sun for hours, waiting for this glimpse of their Saint. They were like two great frescoes, prodigally thrown across the red clay landscape that powdered us with its fine vermilion dust.

Gandhi wore only a loin cloth. We were surrounded by a bodyguard of eight men who carried ugly little lashes of knotted rope, a precaution against the crowd's stampeding and suffocating their *Mahatma.* Beyond the bodyguard, a double line of volunteer police held the crowd back with a fence of bamboo poles—themselves the fence posts. Like an eel, a peasant broke through the lines, threw himself flat in the dust, and reached to touch Gandhi's foot. Looking back, I saw others bending to touch the dust in the print of the Master's naked feet. Mothers held their babies high above their heads that they might boast in years to come that they had seen the *Mahatma.*

There was a tension, a concentrated adoration, which might well prove a heady draught to any man. Gandhi ignored it all. There was no bowing to right and left. With eyes on the ground, he talked earnestly of his mission to restore the spinning industry to India. I knew

that my time with him was brief, and that I must make the most of it. But it was difficult to ignore the throngs about us, as I walked beside this simple, almost naked man between pulsing walls of eager faces and beseeching eyes.

Gandhi is an unprepossessing figure, a small man of perhaps ninety pounds. Prominent collar bones, and the outline of his ribs under the flesh give a skeleton aspect. Following orthodox Hindu custom, his head is shaved, except for a tuft of hair, perhaps six inches long, on the crown. His ears protrude; four front teeth were knocked out in a South African riot. The outline of his face tapers down from a broad brow to a negligible chin. His charm lies in his wise, kindly eyes, boyish smile, and rich voice. His impeccable English accent, and the timbre of his voice give him a formal stamp of distinction and culture. There is about him a remarkable blending of mildness and resolution, of sweetness and determination. In his eyes, there are understanding, wisdom and compassion.

I like best to remember him as I saw him at Belgaum on the last day of the Congress. The speakers' dais was framed in festoons of flowers and red, green and white bunting, stamped in black with Gandhi's beloved *charkha.* Beyond the arched entrance to the tent lay a wilted formal garden and fountain, framed in receding arches of bamboo. Beyond the garden, yellow matting arches marked the street intersections. Crossing the long perspective of these arches flowed a mass of men and women, their homespun draperies and turbans a

dazzling field of color in the sunlight. In their aimless multitude they were a symbol of India herself and the problems with which the men in the tent were groping.

High above us, rose the speakers' rostrum, wreathed in jasmine and marigold. Here stood Gandhi, a slim dark wisp of a man, barelegged, naked to the waist. He ended his closing speech and turned to go. On the top step he paused and stood, looking out over the tensely silent delegates, down the avenue of bamboo arches to the throng flowing past like a river. There was utter silence, and the air was charged with an amazing sense of mutual love. It was a benediction, issuing from Gandhi over the heads of these people he loved with all the sublimated passion of his being. At last, without a word, he came slowly down the steps.

The Santal Parganas

HALF a dozen Santal boys stood in a grove of sacred *sal* trees. They held dingy cotton scarves close around their necks, and their thin brown legs shivered in the chill of early morning. I stopped the car. The boys scampered away like rabbits, looking back over their shoulders. At a safe distance, they stopped and watched us. The shaky old Ford had balked, and it took fifteen minutes of priming and poking to get it started. This was too much for small boy curiosity. Step by step, they crept back for a better view of our queer rites.

The Santals are aborigines having lived in northeastern India for more than 2,000 years, further back than there are any records. They have darker skins than the average Indian. Some are almost charcoal black, and have primitive negroid features; broad depressed nose, full lips, prominent cheek bones. The light-skinned Northern invaders, ancestors of the Hindus, enclosed themselves in the iron walls of caste to protect the purity of their race against such as these. There are two million Santals, and most of them live in a primitive section of Bengal called the Santal Parganas.

I visited a dozen of their villages. They were conspicuously neat and attractive. Some were better kept than others, some of the houses more elaborate, show-

ing that even among aborigines who have never heard of the capitalist system, human nature produces much the same results. The elaborate dwellings must have been built by captains of aboriginal industry.

One evening, I stopped at a house. An old man, his three sons and their wives squatted before the door. It was a simple hut with no verandas, no trimmings, but a pleasant, tidy-looking place. The women were eagerly hospitable. They swept some things off a *charpoy*, and motioned to me to sit down. Through the interpreter, I asked how old the children were. They asked if they might feel my dress. Was it silk? Where did I come from? How far away? Was I married? Did I have any children? I admired their jewelry and they glowed with pleasure. They wore heavy silver hoops as necklaces, like the iron hoops we see in old pictures of slaves. The men made these hoops, melting up *rupees*, and carving them with lovely quaint designs. They contained ten and fifteen dollars' worth of bullion, a vast sum to these people. The women wore innumerable bracelets, and tattooed their arms from the wrists to above the elbow. They also had a patch of tattooing between their breasts in an all-over design suggesting the Persian.

Instead of being tattooed, the men carry the scars of burns made when they reach puberty. The elders hold a burning rag soaked in *ghee* against the boy's arm until it leaves a deep scar. They make three such scars on the forearm and the boy must not wince.

I asked if I might see the inside of a house. One

large room served for living, eating, sleeping. The floor was swept and the room was very neat. A ridge of dried mud in a corner partitioned off a shrine where they worshiped their ancestors. Opening off this room was a storeroom, *godown* they call it. I asked if I might see it. A woman lit a torch. On the clean dirt floor, stood ten enormous earthenware jars of the classical tapering shape, like the old pictures of Ali Baba and the forty thieves. The jars had an opening low on the side, like the bung of a barrel. They are used for storing grain. Four families had their reserve supply in this *godown.* It was neat as a pin, with a hard dirt floor, and bunches of corn and vegetables drying on the walls.

Rice being a staple of their diet, they had four words to express the different stages of its growth: the seedling, in the ear, husked, and boiled. They had six words conveying different meanings of the verb to fall, as—to fall forward, backward, from a height. But when it came to ethical ideas, or the simplest objects of civilization, such as pin, tax, police, they borrowed the word from the Hindu. They had no script until missionaries set down their words phonetically, in order to translate the Bible for them. When their head man took the census for the British *raj,* he tied knots in different colored strings to represent men and women, boys and girls.

They were not vegetarians like the Hindus, but ate snakes, rats, frogs, lizards, and pork. This made them very objectionable to the caste Hindu, as did their

fondness for liquor. The Hindu religion does not tolerate intemperance. Every spring when the *sal* trees flowered, the Santals abandoned themselves to a primitive celebration of several days that usually turned into an orgy. There is a story that a Santal asked a missionary if the Christian God objected to their getting drunk—only once a month.

"Yes," said the missionary, "you must not get drunk at all."

"Well, then, teach our boys and girls, but leave us alone."

They had a straightforwardness and childlike simplicity that was most engaging. I heard old Civil Service officials speak of them with affection. They said that the Santal is independent but most truthworthy and likable.

The Santal village was built along a main street which always pointed east and west. The mud houses had dried in the tropical sun to a firm white or gray plaster, much finer than the adobe huts of our southwest, more like the texture of concrete. The roofs were thatched, and their projecting eaves reached down like a mushroom cap about the white stalk of the house walls. The more ambitious houses showed an interesting variety of architecture and a delightful feeling for symmetry and design. Sometimes the platform and lower wall were of dark red clay, with light gray walls above; or a dark gray base with white top. The lines were clean and true, the colors in broad bands, the effect that of some model village.

A platform two feet wide and perhaps two feet high ran round the houses. It reënforced the walls, made a convenient place to squat and gossip, and a shelf for standing brass water jars and kettles to dry and glisten in the sun. The platform widened out before the more substantial houses to a real veranda, shaded by overhanging eaves of a brown thatched roof, which was supported by symmetrical pillars and arches. Diminishing blocks of plaster, as firm and smooth as concrete, made neat steps to the ground. On the veranda, leaning against the wall, stood crude wooden contrivances, the sum total of their mechanical inventions and borrowings for thousands of years: a *charpoy*, or bed frame, a *dhenki*, or rice husker, a *janta*, or hand-mill.

Their village organization was similar to the Hindu. The *manjhi*, or head man, presided over a *Panchayat*, or council of five elders (*panch*, Hindi for five). I saw on a main street a *manjhithan*, a small mound under a thatched roof. The roughly carved wooden obelisk was a memorial to the spirit of their former *manjhi* and his wife who had been greatly beloved.

Like most primitives, the Santals had a number of tabus. The most interesting were prohibitions against speaking the names of certain relatives. A man might not mention the names of his younger brother's wife, or his wife's younger brother's wife. A woman observed the same tabus with the sexes reversed. There was a shrewd applied psychology about these tabus. It is easy to imagine some of the family mix-ups out of which

they grew. Meeting a tabu in real life gave a sudden added vividness to Frazer's *Golden Bough.*

Beside keeping their villages clean, they had other delightful traits. They had no caste, no *purdah,* and no child marriage. Their young people met naturally at the market. The boy picked his girl for looks, sent a go-between to her parents, and the marriage was arranged.

'Untouchability,' child marriage and the non-remarriage of widows, had so depressed me that these people, themselves 'Untouchable,' who had so simple and sensible a mode of life, gave me extraordinary pleasure. I beamed upon them continuously and wished that I could tell them how much I liked them. They had charming customs. The shepherd boys played bamboo flutes, and led their flocks to graze among groves of sacred *sal* trees, piping through the cool gray dawn.

The men still used bows and arrows, and were expert marksmen. I saw them coming into a village market with bows slung over their shoulders, and arrows in a quiver on their backs. Even fifty years ago, this country was, as Trader Horn puts it, a veritable zoo. Tigers, leopards, bears, deer, wild pig were common and are still occasionally seen. The last wild elephant was shot in 1893. Before that, herds of wild elephant used to lay waste entire villages.

I attended a meeting of a village *Panchayat,* or Council of Elders. They were considering the case of an unmarried girl who was pregnant. The father of her child refused to marry her, and had gone away to a

neighboring village. It is not uncommon for young people to live together before marriage, but it is understood that if the girl becomes pregnant, the father of the child must marry her. They are a homogeneous people and, in the past, when they moved, usually moved as a village. For one young swain to walk off by himself was one more example of the insidious effect of our modern life, even on the 'flaming youth' of the aborigines.

The girl, who was in her early teens, sat with her mother, looking stolid. Her father did the talking, and he had a good deal to say. It was decided to send a message to the faithless youth, ordering him to come back to the girl. He had the alternative of paying her enough for a dowry, so that she would have no difficulty in getting another husband.

I saw another village of Santals near Asansol, the Pittsburgh of India, with its great steel mills, coal mines, and railroad yards. Asansol lies south of the Santal Parganas. After their many centuries of isolation, modern industry is luring the Santals away from their clean-swept villages to burrow in coal mines and work for wages of fifteen cents a day, which is more than double their earnings at home. Their employers, Scotch and English superintendents of collieries and steel works, are as enthusiastic about them as the Civil Service officials of the old days. They say that they are honest and reliable, and one of their most dependable sources of labor.

I doubt whether their integrity will long survive the

influence of our Western civilization. The workers in Asansol are herded in 'coolie lines,' close-built lines of one-room huts the size of chicken coops. Crowding these primitive people into the congestion of civilized slum life produces shocking results. Their huts have no ventilation. The walls are patched with rusty, flattened-out Standard Oil tins. The thatched roofs leak on the damp dirt floors. The water supply is dubious and inadequate. They have an antipathy to the usual sanitary arrangements which makes the problems of congested villages particularly difficult.

I was incredulous when they pointed out the Santal villages along the Grand Trunk road. Instead of the neatly thatched roofs of the Parganas, as deftly trimmed as a well-kept hedge, these thatches lay in straggling wisps, their framework showing, rags and old tins stuffed here and there to stop up leaks. Instead of the shining brass and copper of the villages, here were smoky earthenware pots and ugly galvanized iron pails. The ground was littered with trash. I thought back to the little brown pixies dancing under the green *sal* trees, and the smiling women, babies on their hips, making me welcome in their tidy homes. Such is the cost of progress.

The Call of the Wild

GLEAMING brass jars clattered from train to platform—high vase-shaped jars. Filled with milk they went up to Calcutta every morning, and a load of empties returned in the afternoon. Coolies slung them in ropes from each end of a pole over their shoulders, and jog-trotted across the green fields. Yellow brass flashed in the sunlight between brown bodies.

A speaker from the Bengal Social Service League was giving an illustrated talk on hygiene at a *mela* in an outcaste village, fifty miles from Calcutta. He kindly invited me to accompany him. The League, a Hindu organization, has a paid staff of a dozen men, and many volunteers. They organize relief work during floods, plagues and famines. In normal times, they lecture on village hygiene, tuberculosis, care of infants, all the slow uphill educational work which goes to raising the level of a civilization. They make intensive community studies, using questionnaires, and modern sociological methods, and they organize exhibitions, preparing statistics, charts, bioscope lectures. There are similar organizations in all the larger Indian cities. They hold national conferences, and are an influential movement. They are entirely Indian in organization and personnel.

The Village Improvement Society giving the *mela* was a humble local organization, not even subsidized

from outside. It interested me the more for this fact. It indicated a smoldering consciousness of social abuses and needed reforms, far below the surface.

We stood around in the shade of the station shed. The Hindu station master greeted us. A coolie appeared with an armchair for me, and I sat. Every one else squatted. I supposed they had sent for a bullock cart. But no. The wait was part of the deliberation with which things happen in the East. No messenger arrived. Nothing happened. After ten minutes, for no apparent reason, every one stood up, and my host said that if I was ready, we would walk over to the *mela.* The stereopticon was balanced on the head of one coolie, the box of glass slides on another, and we were off, single file down the brown path, waist deep in green grass.

After a half mile of jungle, we reached a clearing. Several hundred men and children squatted on the ground under a tent top, a *shamiana* they call it. In the rear, behind a bamboo screen, their women stood, peering over each other shoulders, holding babies at their breasts. This was an outcaste village of 200 families. Selling the sacred cow's milk was not prohibited, but was usually left to outcastes. The women worked with the men in the fields. At a social gathering they became self-conscious and pretended that they were *purdah* women.

The Village Improvement Society gave a *mela* twice a year. The long program was devised, cast, costumed,

rehearsed and produced by the villagers themselves. Most of the caste were illiterate. Educated villagers wrote out the parts and coached the actors. Some parts were impromptu; others used folk songs and legends. It was a vaudeville of songs, dances, playlets. The stage was a cleared space in the center of the crowd, about twelve feet square. An orchestra squatted at one side: a modified violin, an *eshraz,* a long-necked, exotic-looking stringed instrument, a tom-tom, cymbals, a chorus of men's voices, and two harmoniums.

As an act ended, the traps man struck a gong to signal for the next. The actors made their exit leaping over the squatters who blotted out the path as fast as it was cleared. Performers for the next act bounded in. The performance lasted all day, and into the evening. Not once was there any delay. It was one of the rare occasions when I saw Indians recognize the idea of time.

All the actors were men. The costumes were clever adaptations of their ordinary clothes. I recognized a strip of scarlet reappearing as a scarf, a turban, a basket cover. They had impressive wigs, hired from a Calcutta costumer. This bit of enterprise and extravagance overwhelmed me. A good-looking boy dressed as a sweeper girl wore a long black wig, a *sari* draped fetchingly over his head, and heavy anklets with jingling bells. He danced with peacocks' feathers for a broom, and sang about a sweeper's life. Two *bhistis* (water carriers), empty goat skins slung over their shoulders, sprinkled the stage and danced

and sang. Village life passed in review. The brief dramatic sketches moralized artlessly with whimsical and sometimes grotesque humor.

Three men were dressed as *sannyasis:* yellow robes, brown rosaries, faces streaked with red paint and white ashes—followers of the god Vishnu. Yellow canvas skull-caps burlesqued shaven heads, with dangling black topknots. They did a grotesque dance and, in their song, confessed themselves as hypocrites and thieves. "We repeat *mantras* (verses) by the hour, but all the time, we are really thinking how to steal your wife, how to trick you out of something we want." My host translated as they sang. I was amazed at their freedom and irreverence. Later, several men of the village agreed that while they give to these begging priests, it is tacitly recognized that most of them are thieves and scoundrels, and there is a smoldering resentment against them. I heard many educated Indians denounce them.

In another sketch, the village drunkard lurched in. He was an old man, wearing a loin cloth and dirty turban. He carried a bottle and a coconut shell. The Hindu religion censures the use of liquor. Drunkenness carries more social stigma than in our own country where prohibition is only a law. The drunkard staggered up to an arrogant young Brahman and offered him a drink, which the latter indignantly refused. The drunkard drew back, "What's this, why so proud? Your father who was a humble shoemaker (an outcaste occupation) used to eat meat with me and drink with

me, many's the time. But now his son puts on a Brahman cord and acts as though he were somebody." The point is a bit involved. These modern days of railroads and factories have shaken the stability of Indian social life. To-day an enterprising 'Untouchable' may wind his turban round his head, take a twelve-hour train journey, and step off the train to begin life anew. No one in the community knows him. If he has been clever enough to observe the upper castes and learn their codes, he has a fair chance of passing himself off as one of them. The skit satirized the caste system and showed that modern conditions are making a travesty of its most rigid traditions.

The old drunkard was the star of the *mela.* He reappeared constantly, as a midwife, a matchmaker, a fisherman. From his first leering entrance as a drunkard, he carried conviction that here was an actor. He had that magic gift which reaches across footlights, or, in this case, the dancing haze of a tropical afternoon. With the assurance of a trained actor, he kept us waiting for his lines. I met him after the performance. He was just a simple old farmer. Off the stage, his face lost its animation, and he looked an ordinary peasant. But he was dimly aware of his magic gift which, under other skies, might have made him a matinée idol, pampered and indolent.

Hour after hour the audience applauded eagerly, in strong contrast to the apathy of city audiences at the cinema. My Hindu host was a young assistant lecturer for a Social Reform League. I was unknown. The

courtesy with which they received me was entirely spontaneous, and was typical of the hospitality and kindliness which I met at all times. When we arrived at the *shamiana*, the committee sent a coolie running to the house of the local grandee for the only chair in the village. They picked out the best vantage point, shooed away half a dozen men, and placed me and my chair in state. They decided that was not quite the best spot, chased away more men, and moved my chair. They moved it yet again before they were satisfied. A man stood beside my chair to fan me with a long-handled palm leaf fan, edged with a ruffle of bright pink cambric. At first, I was embarrassed by such a reception. But they showed such sweet and simple friendliness that I could only accept their courtesies and smile and be appreciative.

In the twilight, some village Fathers and I strolled up the jungle road. Sitting in front of the *zamindar's* house, we had an impromptu supper of fresh fruit. Fruits offer a convenient compromise for the orthodox Hindu. He would be defiled by eating rice and cooked food with any one outside his caste. Fruit does not count.

It was almost dark when we returned to the tent. An acetylene torch made a flare of yellow light. A lone, middle-aged-looking woman came from behind the bamboo screen, and squatted near me. I was pleased that even one woman had the courage to leave that coop where she could see nothing, and sit down comfortably. I leaned forward and tried to talk and,

at any rate, smiled at her. She was shy, but she smiled back.

A lad dressed as a young girl minced to the center of the stage in the wake of a matchmaker, to be looked over by a young man. The matchmaker stood back, and after some preliminaries the two began a curious galloping chase around the little enclosure, the girl coy and bewildered, the man pursuing her with extravagant gestures. It was much the same sort of thing as an Apache dance. Against staccato drum beats rose the wailing music. The girl, mockingly coy in a modest *sari* of rose and green; the man in a loin cloth, prancing round her with contortions and screams of excitement, fairly devouring her with his eyes. Beyond the figures of the dancers rose tiers of smiling dark faces in the flickering light. There was no rough laughter, no unwonted applause, just a complacent smiling like a sophisticated Continental audience. My host who had been interpreting for me explained who the characters were, and said no more. He was not embarrassed and neither was I. Indians are more natural about the elemental things of life than we are. They have been spared our Puritan prudishness. Dysentery, childbirth, sex, are to them simple facts of life, like trees and camels and hunger.

As soon as the last act was over, my host jumped to his feet, and shouted to the crowd to wait for his lecture. It was the same sort of thing we see at home: enlarged microscopic studies were thrown on the curtain of the mosquito and its eggs, stagnant puddles

where they breed, pictures of flies. The slides were colored, well drawn, and well selected. The audience was attentive.

The lecture over, a minute of darkness followed. Just as the torch flared up, there was a scream. A dozen men rushed across the tent, a few feet from me. With a surge of excited chatter, the crowd, which was drifting into the jungle, turned to mill and trip over the guy ropes of the *shamiana*. They struggled to get into the tent, against those inside trying to get out. Suddenly the crowd opened, and a man shot past, blood dripping from his arm, followed by a man with a knife. A tall powerful Indian, one of the lecturers, seized the man with the knife and took it away from him as though he had been a child.

The crowd closed again, and there was more milling. This time, I learned afterward, a man was stabbed in the side. I did not see any more because the tall Indian had grasped my elbow and, with no ceremony at all, hurried me out of the tent away from the crowd. At the time, they professed not to know what it was all about. Later I learned that the lone and, as I had thought, elderly looking woman who squatted near me, was not a rebellious feminist. She was a widow and a prostitute who had come out to attract attention. Some of the village fathers were incensed by her effrontery and wanted to eject her. Others, seeing that she had sat down near me, and that I had spoken to her, thought it would be conspicuous to put her out, and advised leaving her alone. The dispute smoldered

along through the evening, until, the lecture over, it exploded in a free-for-all row ending in the stabbing.

I had been charmed with the *mela*. The sketches were clever and showed a surprising sense of social values. The audience understood and applauded them. The stage direction was admirable and showed capacity for organization and punctuality. The ambition of renting those wigs in Calcutta—I could not get over that. In the twinkling of an eye, this community, which had seemed such an aspiring, receptive group, reverted to the primitive. In three seconds, I was in the center of a jungle riot—short, hard-breathing, guttural monosyllables, the crowd milling, tent ropes creaking, the gleam of a knife and a splash of red blood. It was hard to realize that this was the material out of which the brave little Village Improvement Association had molded their gay and romping *mela*.

The significance of the incident is about equivalent to that of our Southern lynchings. The difference in provocation offsets the difference in literacy and standards. Our lynchings do not prove that we are unfit to govern ourselves, nor even that we are a particularly brutal and blood-thirsty race. Similarly, it would be unfair to generalize from this picturesque stabbing affray. All that either shows is that human nature is a good deal alike, that we have none of us come very far, and that we all have a long way to go.

India's Renaissance

THE slavery of feudalism, the tortures of the Spanish Inquisition, the false romanticism of the Age of Chivalry, the horrors of smallpox and the Black Death, these were some of the abuses with which our forefathers struggled a few centuries ago. Following the Middle Ages of superstition, cruelty and disease came the Renaissance, our Rebirth and Revival of Learning.

In her bondage to custom and superstition, in her primitive industrial and agricultural life, India lingers in the Middle Ages. Her Renaissance lies before her. Who can determine the length of the transition? Already there are indications that it has begun.

India's age-long isolation is ended. Easy traveling facilities, the exchange of books and telegraphic press service have brought the East in touch with Western influence as never before. It is no longer the 'Unchanging East.' Turkey, Russia and Japan have changed almost beyond recognition. China is changing. India is thinking of change. She has her pioneers in science such as Sir J. C. Bose and Sir P. C. Ray; in industry, such as the Tata Iron and Steel Works, in social reform such as Gandhi and a host of others. She is discarding age-old customs. She is bending her

energies toward political democracy, not only in her agitation for *swaraj*, but in organization of women, 'Untouchables,' non-Brahmans, and others.

Our materialistic West has laid at the Hindu's feet comforts and conveniences which he wants. He must make an effort to pick them up. He has already stooped a little. To-day, the Brahman travels in a crowded third-class carriage, even though he takes ceremonial baths afterward. I often saw dignified, high-caste men buying bottles of aërated water and boxes of English biscuit at the railroad stations. They assume that, packed by machinery, they have not been defiled by foreign hands.

Orthodox Hindus have made exceptions from their former inflexible codes in favor of European medicine, and city water drawn from pipes. Brahman medical students may handle and dissect corpses without losing caste. Prohibition of interdining is rigidly maintained on the theory that lower castes and outcastes contaminate, but few have the courage to refuse to dine with Europeans at Government House.

His Holiness Shri Vibudhapriya Theertha Swamigal, one of the ranking priests of southern India, not long ago gave a statement to the press of Madras. He said that leading Hindus of all shades of opinion had urged the religious heads of southern India to give definite pronouncements on various social questions. He was therefore calling a conference to consider the following propositions:

(1) Whether to permit foreign travel;

(2) Relaxing 'Untouchability' from its present rigid form;

(3) Extension of right of temple entry and worship to classes now excluded;

(4) Readmission of ex-converts to Hindu faith;

(5) That the present custom of early marriage is detrimental to the proper physical and mental growth of the community; and that post-puberty marriages and widow remarriage, which loom large in the planks of social reformers, should be examined with a view to finding out whether there is any justification for the complaints now made by a section of the people against the present system.

Whether or not the reformers secure immediate progressive action, the calling of the conference indicates that these customs have been put on the defensive. It marks a revolutionary loosening of old bonds and prejudices. Reform can go no faster than public opinion is created. Prohibition illustrates the futility of passing an arbitrary law which the will of the people does not support.

Industry is another gigantic influence hovering over the East. The Orient's uncounted resources of man power are as irresistible to modern industry as unexploited deposits of coal and metals. Industrial penetration of the East has barely begun. The number of employees in Indian cotton and jute mills has doubled in the last twenty-five years. Even so, there were in 1921 only 4,000 factories subject to inspection, employing a million and a quarter workers.

The most conspicuous change so far is in the growth of cities. In 1881 there were no cities of a million

population, and only five of over 200,000. In 1921, there were two cities of over a million and ten of over 200,000. Compared with the development of our Western states since 1881, this is a snail's pace. But compared with the medieval immobility of her traditions, India's response is impressive. The Santals kept their bows and arrows and their shepherd's pipes for thousands of years. They are throwing them away to work in the steel mills and coal mines of Asansol.

The World War gave India a powerful back-handed fillip toward change. It lowered white prestige. It challenged India's pride by giving rise to discussions of self-determination and the rights of small nations. Agitation for constitutional reform became more sharply defined. In spite of the Reforms granted since, India is dissatisfied and looks questioningly into the future for further change. She shows little or no desire to break away from England. Most of the Indians I met were proud of belonging to the British Empire, and loyal. They mean by the term *swaraj*, self-government within the Empire. They are impatient to make more rapid progress toward Dominion status.

Her own efforts toward free compulsory education promise radical change for India as they reach fulfillment. In their 150 years of rule, the British have barely scratched the surface of education. How much India's social abuses are the result, and how much the cause, of her illiteracy is a complex question, like the argument as to whether the hen or the egg came first.

The keynote of the democratic spirit of the West

which distinguishes our life from that of the Middle Ages and of the Orient is the emancipation of what had formerly been the inarticulate lower classes. Steam and electricity have set free millions of human hands and given their owners opportunities for education, leisure and a higher standard of living. Scientific laboratories concentrate their vast resources on perfecting comforts and luxuries for the millions—modern plumbing, automobiles and radios. We have accepted the principle that every human being has the right to an elementary education. All the rest—improved working conditions, higher pay, shorter hours, elimination of drudgery by machinery—is superstructure. The foundation is free compulsory education, the Three R's.

Education of the Indian masses is an essential preliminary to the success of their efforts to free themselves from superstitious customs and age-old traditions. Gokhale, their greatest leader of the last generation, made a determined but unsuccessful campaign for free compulsory education in the early 1900's. To-day resolutions on the subject are adopted at almost every conference. Progressive Indians recognize elementary education as an essential first step in any social program.

The pity is that India cannot retain her medieval charm while sloughing off her abuses. The two are inextricable. Gandhi attempting to boycott machinery is another Canute bidding the incoming tide recede. Recognizing the inevitability of the change, I can only sympathize with Gandhi in his horror over an India

clanking with machinery, geared up to a breathless efficiency.

The spirit of democracy does not brook considerations of charm or picturesqueness. The price that India must pay for being modernized is heavy, but it is too late to argue the matter. A variety of powerful influences making for change are at work in India to-day, as inevitable and relentless as evolution itself.

Greed and competition alone make it inevitable that industry will exploit India's vast resources of man power. She is experiencing a slight foretaste of what this will mean in the crowded, death-breeding *chawls* of Bombay and Cawnpore.

Here on the other side of the world, India's problems have a strange exotic sound, her wandering sacred bulls, her naked wild-eyed *sannyasis*. Analyze these picturesque symptoms and they all take root in the illiteracy and superstition of the masses of the people. Wipe out illiteracy and this creeping jungle of parasitic growths would be swept away.

I can not imagine that an educated India would tolerate *purdah*, child marriage, the disabilities of widows. It is appalling to compare the influence of a body of 300 million illiterate men and women with the potential power that education would give them for progress and advancement. Education would bring a new atmosphere of common sense and wholesome interest into Indian life, a release to the women, a new stimulus to the men.

Education would form an entering wedge for the emancipation of the fifty million 'Untouchables.' It would be a leveling influence between the castes, laying bare the artificiality of the system. It would weaken the superstitious credulity which makes the masses the easy prey of five million beggar priests and all the other parasitic growths of Hinduism. It would undermine the Indian's blind fatalism and begin to replace it with an intelligent materialism which takes account of such forces as bacteria and economics.

Illiterate, ignorant of the rudiments of sanitation, of hygiene, of democratic organization, a prey to superstitious fears of gods and devils, an industrialized India would furnish a massacre of the innocents such as the world has never known. Her only protection from ruthless exploitation, her only hope for the future lies in free compulsory education, the Three R's for the Indian masses.

Postscript

HERE in New York where the façades of our streets, the contour of our skyline changes from week to week, the changelessness still lingering over India is an alluring memory. My greatest pleasure in writing this book has been that it carried me back in spirit to the sunshine and color of the tropics. I wish that I could convey something of this exotic charm as a suffusing background, in which the reader would find himself understanding the medievalism of India, without condoning her shortcomings.

The glamor of India to me is compounded of all manner of enchantments, soft spicy winds blowing through palm trees and jungles, the chatter of monkeys, the shrill cries of parrots, the luminous colors of an Indian crowd, orange and scarlet, peacock-blues and greens, a haunting odor of myrrh and musk and decay, the clink of women's anklets, the distant beat of a drum.

Beneath the surface, I felt the richness of her age-old culture. Again and again as I traveled over India there lay revealed the priceless patina of the centuries, that mellow charm which is the only compensation for the loss of youth.

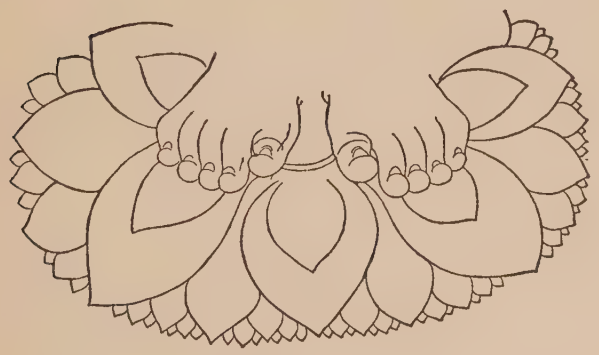
Such a moment came with my first sunrise at Darjeeling. It was twilight when I arrived, and white fog

hemmed me in. The studio window of my bungalow bedroom overlooked Mount Kichinjunga, the sister peak to Mount Everest. I woke in the magical light of early dawn to look out over vast chasms and ravines into the heart of the Himalayas. It was as though all the mountains and valleys of the world were spread beneath my window. Lesser mountains had not prepared me for the majesty of those gigantic heights and depths. While Europe weltered in the bloodshed and agony of the Hundred Years' War, these mountains rose from the darkness each morning in their sublime peace and beauty. Through the turmoil of the centuries these eternal snows have stood, untouched, unshadowed by human ambition or distress. Until the world dissolves in chaos, men and women will climb these heights to watch the dawn spread over vast white peaks, and to thrill to the sense of their own insignificance.

I caught a glimpse of infinity. Stretching on and on into the sky, where before I had seen only stars and planets, white masses of ice and snow pierced the heavens. Remote and unapproachable summits, they permeated the consciousness of the tropical valleys and deltas at their feet. There was something of the same vast scale, beyond Good and Evil, in the sense of the centuries of Indian civilization above which these mountains towered, inscrutable sentinels.

I remember another vivid moment sitting in the minaret-like turret over the entrance to the *Purana Kilia* on the plains outside of Delhi. The Fort is immensely old, and its predecessors stretch back in an unbroken line

to the dawn of history. Armies and camel caravans and wedding processions traced their fleeting footprints across these sandy plains in the days of Troy and Nineveh. Eager youth, aristocrat and peasant, has soaked the sand with its blood for thousands of years. Sitting in that quaint turret of blue and white Persian tile, I was overwhelmed by the interminable length of Time. It was as though these inanimate tiles and bricks and desert sands and the arching bowl of sky were personified, and shared in the sophistication of the age-long process of civilization which has passed over these plains like a pageant.



Glossary

ANNA. Coin worth two cents.
ASHRAM. Hermitage.
AYAH. A nurse for children or personal maid.
BABU. Literally a gentleman. Equivalent of Mr. among the Hindus. A clerk.
BABUL. An acacia tree.
BAGH. A garden.
BAKSHEESH, BAKSHISH. Small change given in charity or as a tip.
BAZAAR. Street lined with shops.
BEARER. Personal servant.
BEGUM. Muslim title for woman ruler. Also used of old ladies.
BETEL. Leaf of a plant used for chewing.
BIRIES. Cheap cigarettes.
BHISTI. Water carrier and street sprinkler.
BHAJAN. Devotional song.
BOXWALLAH. Tradesman.
BRAHMAN. Hindu of the first or priestly caste.
BURKA. White bag with holes for eyes worn over their heads by Muslim women.
CHA. Tea.
CHAMPAK. A tree with fragrant blossoms.
CHAPATI. A cake of unleavened bread.
CHARKHA. Spinning wheel.
CHARPOY. Wooden bed frame with woven bands or ropes instead of springs.
CHAUKIDAR. Watchman.
CHAWL. Workmen's one-room hut in industrial cities.

CHIT, CHITTHI. Letter or note.

CHHOTA. Small, as chhota hazri, light breakfast; chhota peg, short drink of whisky.

CHUPRASSI. Official messenger.

COMPOUND. Grounds of house, usually enclosed by high wall.

DAK BUNGALOW. Traveler's bungalow.

DAL. A generic term applied to various lentils.

DEVADASI. A girl dedicated to the service of the gods in Hindu temples.

DHENKI. Rice-husker.

DHOBI. A washerman.

DHOTI. Draped cloth worn by men, instead of trousers.

DURZI. Tailor.

DURBAR. State assemblage.

EKKA. Small two-wheeled horse cart, generally for hire.

EURASIAN. Of mixed Indian and European blood.

EUROPEAN. All white foreigners, including English and Americans.

FAKIR. Muslim ascetic, corresponding to Hindu sannyasi.

GADI. Throne.

GARRY. Carriage or cart.

GHAT. Bathing-steps on bank of tank or river.

GHEE. Clarified butter.

GODOWN. Storeroom or warehouse.

GOSHALA. Cattle shed.

GRIFFIN. European recently arrived in India.

GURU. School master or religious teacher.

HOOKAH. Tobacco pipe attached to a bowl of water.

HOURI. Beautiful maiden.

HOWDAH. Railed or canopied seat on back of elephant, carrying several passengers.

JAGIR. An assignment of land.

JANTA. Hand-mill for grinding corn or wheat.

JHAVERKHAN. Treasury of jewels and precious things.
KARMA. Hindu doctrine that what a man sows he must reap.
KHADI. Cotton cloth handwoven from handspun yarn.
KHAN BAHADUR. Title conferred on Muslims by British Government.
KSHATRIYA. Second or warrior caste.
KUTCHA. Poor, bad, weak, raw, imitation; opposite of pukka, q. v.
LAC. One hundred thousand.
LATHI. Heavy staff, usually tipped with metal.
LINGAM. Emblem representing god Shiva.
LOTA. Metal water jug, usually of brass.
MAHARAJAH. Highest of Hindu Princes; Maha, great; Rajah, ruler.
MAHARANA. Variation of title Maharajah used in Udaipur.
MAHARANI. Feminine of Maharajah.
MAHATMA. Great soul. Title given to men who are considered to have transcended limitations of the flesh.
MALI. Gardener.
MAHOUT. Elephant driver.
MANGO. Tropical fruit.
MANJHI. Head man of Santal village.
MANTRA. Sacred incantations, sometimes containing rules of conduct.
MAYA. Illusion.
MELA. Festival or fair, usually religious in origin.
MEMSAHIB. Equivalent of Mrs. Used only for European women.
MISSAHIB. Equivalent of Miss. Used only for European women.
MOFUSSIL. Interior of country.
NAUTCH. Hindu form of dance. Nautch girls, dancing girls.
NAWAB. Muslim ruler or prince.

PADDY. Rice plants.

PALANQUIN. Closed conveyance carried on shoulders of four men for transporting passengers.

PAN. Betel leaf used for chewing.

PANCH. Five.

PANCHAYAT. Village council of five elders.

PAPAYA. Fruit, remotely resembling cantaloupe.

PESHWA. Hindu prince.

PICE. Copper or bronze coin, about one-half a cent.

PLANTAIN. Banana.

PUGREE. Scarf wound around head.

PUJA. Offerings and prayers to the gods. Any act of obeisance.

PUKKA. Good, ripe, regular, thorough. Popular and elastic term, like our O. K.

PUNDAL. Tent.

PUNDIT. Hindu title for learned man.

PUNKAH. Curtain hanging from pole, pulled by rope to stir air.

PURDAH. Curtain or veil. General term for custom of secluding women.

RAJ. Popular term for British Government in India. Any régime.

RAJAH. Ruler or Prince.

RUPEE. Coin worth 36½ cents.

RYOT. A peasant.

SADHU. Hindu holy man.

SAHIB. Equivalent to Mr. Used only for European men.

SAL. A species of tree.

SALAAM. Bows and greetings.

SANNYASI. Wandering, mendicant Hindu priest.

SARI. Draped garment worn by women.

SATI. Widow who burns herself on funeral pyre of her husband.

SATYAGRAHA. Following the truth through soul force.

Seth. Banker.
Shamiana. Canopy or marquee erected out-of-doors.
Shisham. Valuable timber tree.
Sudra. Lowest of four castes. Servant caste.
Sunnud. Certificate.
Swaraj. Self-government.
Thakur. Petty chieftain; also, title of respect.
Tiffin. Luncheon.
Tolliwallah. Foreman.
Tonga. One- or two-horse vehicle with covered top.
Topee. Cork helmet covered with canvas.
Tumtum. Two-wheeled vehicle like dog-cart for private use.
Vaisya. Third or tradesman caste.
Vina. Stringed musical instrument.
Yogi. Hindu ascetic who practices Yoga.
Zamindar. Landlord.
Zenana. Women's wing or section of house. Generic term for women.

DATE DUE

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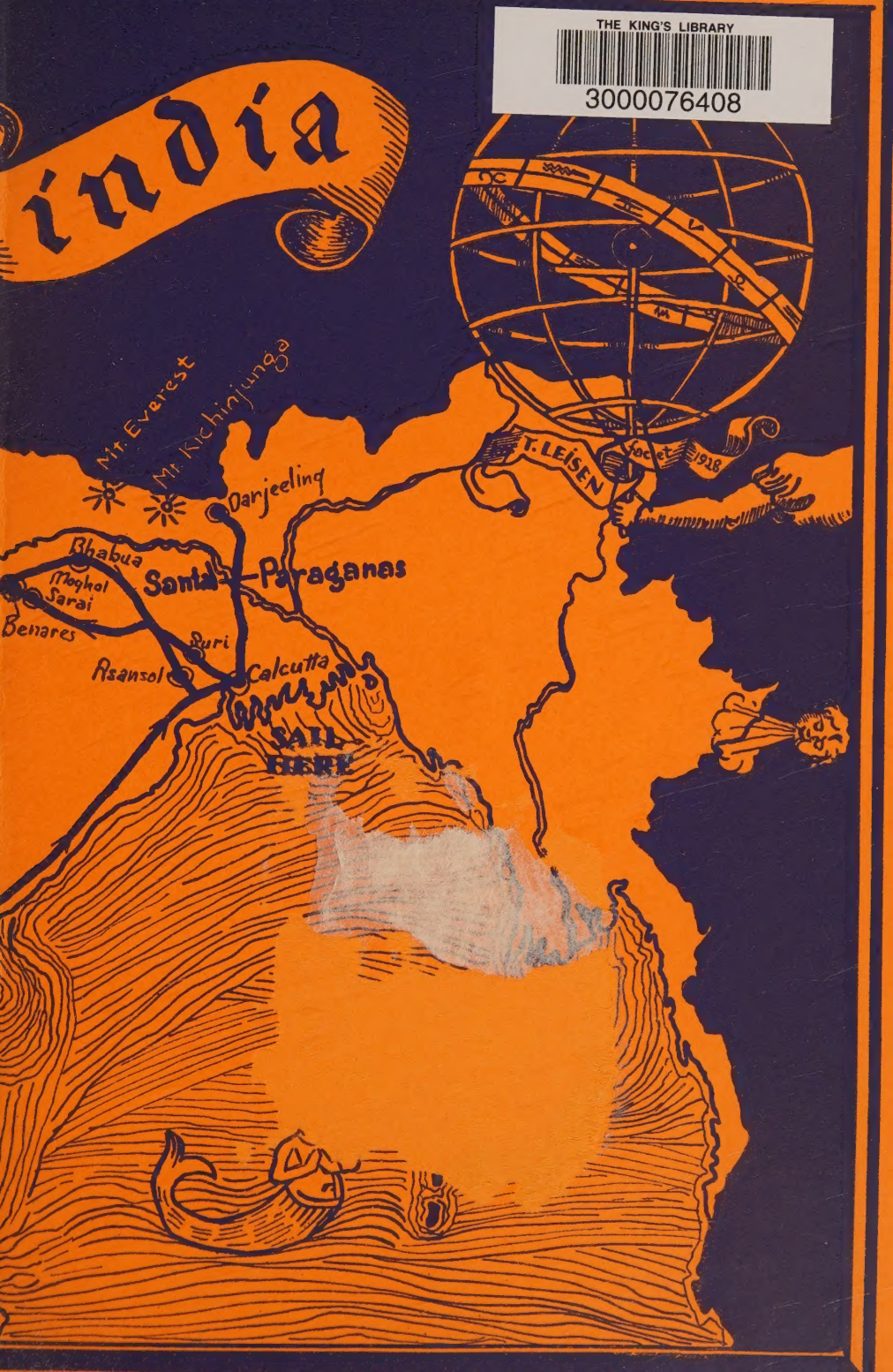
Bombay
Bona
Belgaum
Goa
Madras
Trichinopoly
Tanjore
Madura

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